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ABSTRACT

The Choctaw Adult Education Program was designed to give the adults access to an educational program in their own communities. It was based on the concept that equal emphasis would be placed on the delivery of effective client services and the development of professionals from among the program's client population. Initially, learning centers were established in the 4 largest Choctaw communities. Each center was open for two, 3-hour flexibly scheduled evening sessions per week. However, due to the initial response, evening classes were opened in 2 other communities and day classes were also established in the 4 larger communities. Commercially made worktexts were used due to the adult's preference for them. However, when the adults were ready, teacher-made materials were used. Individual student gains were evaluated through analysis of nationally standardized general ability measures, observations, affective measures, teacher records, and questionnaires. The program's progress was evaluated via formal and informal gestures, mostly informal. This volume describes the project's history, intent, design, staff training, demonstration functions, and results. The appendices cover: students' educational level; reasons for level of schooling completed, for attending class, and for withdrawal; sources of information about adult education; and attendance fluctuations. (NQ)

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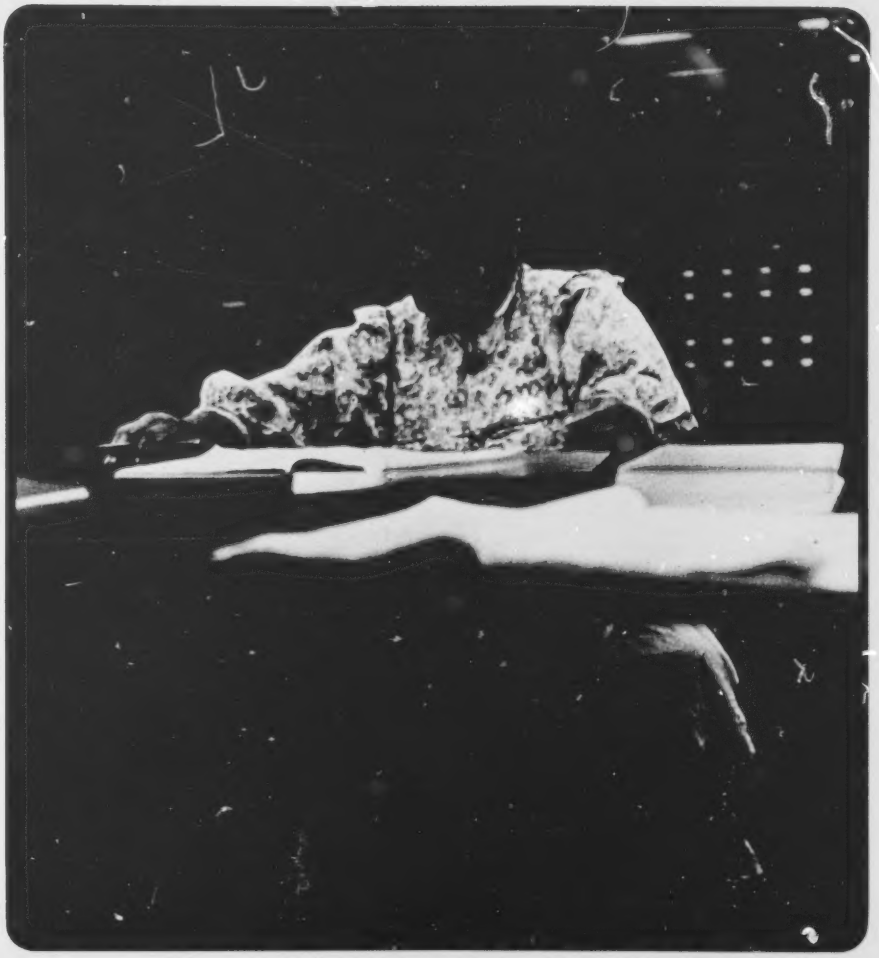
CHOCTAW ADULT EDUCATION



LEARNING . . . A LIFE LONG PROCESS

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Volume I

A 309 (b) Demonstration Project
Final Report

RC 008823

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CHOCTAW ADULT EDUCATION

A 309(B) Demonstration Project

OEG-0-72-1435

FINAL REPORT

Submitted To

U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare

Bureau of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education

By The

Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians

Route 7, Box 21

Philadelphia, Mississippi 39350

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INFORMATION SHEET ON THE MISSISSIPPI CHOCTAW INDIANS

Prepared by the:

MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS
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Joe D. Isaac, Vice-Chairman	Pearl River Community
Frank Steve, Secretary-Treasurer	Conehatta Community
Allie Cooke	Tucker Community
Maxine Dixon	Red Water Community
Albert Farve	Tucker Community
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Odie Jim	Bogue Chitto Community
Smith John	Red Water Community
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MARCH 1, 1975

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Disclaimer and Acknowledgement

The project presented or reported herein was performed pursuant to a grant from the U.S. Office of Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U. S. Office of Education, and no official endorsement by the U.S. Office of Education should be inferred.

MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS

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February 5, 1975

Casper Weinberger
Secretary--Department of Health, Education and Welfare
330 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Mr. Weinberger:

The Choctaw Adult Education Program, through target population control of curriculum, flexible programming and extensive use of paraprofessional staff, has demonstrated that a model program of adult instruction can be an unqualified success on a rural Indian reservation.

The Choctaw Tribe is proud of the accomplishments of the Adult Education Program over the past two years. Program statistics (360 individuals served, 46 persons obtaining high school equivalency certification) can show only partially the gains made by the Choctaw people and the contributions of Adult Education to Self-Determination. The following report, while comprehensive, cannot possibly cite all of the many effects that the program has had in the areas of health, employment, child development, citizen education, and the preservation of Choctaw culture. A thorough study of this report, however, may give the reader some idea of the nature of the program's widespread impact.

The Congress recently eliminated the appropriation for section 309(b) programs, under which the program has been partially supported, and special projects will now be forced to depend upon state adult education agencies for aid. Indian tribes generally can have little confidence in state agencies insofar as funding is concerned, a view reinforced by the recent refusal of the Mississippi State Department of Education to commit resources to the Choctaw Adult Education Program. The discontinuance of 309(b) programs and lack of interest on the part of states are very disappointing to Indian people who wish to continue their education.

As Tribal Chairman, I wish to express my appreciation to the U.S. Office of Education and the Bureau of Indian Affairs for their technical assistance and financial support, to the staff of the tribal Adult Education Program for their unfailing efforts and dedication, and to the program participants, who struggled to better their education and stand as fine examples of Choctaw Self-Determination at work.

Sincerely,

Phillip Martin
Tribal Chairman

PM/cm

"CHOCTAW SELF-DETERMINATION"

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PROJECT RESULTS: SUMMARY

Choctaw Adult Education, a community-based program, has been operating since 1972 by the Tribal Council, Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, with funding from both the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare Office of Education*, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. While funding was approved to serve 100 adult members of the tribe with four classes, response to the program was such that ten classes were provided for six of the seven on-reservation communities for the more than 200 adults who regularly attended.

With respect to those aspects of project results which were quantified, Choctaw's project recorded marked success, in many instances surpassing the project objectives: statistical data for the project was drawn from an evaluation of pre-and post-test scores recorded for most of the adults attending classes (not every adult in the program had both pre- and post-tested scores). The tests used were the Gray-Votaw-Rogers Series, Primary, Intermediate, and Advanced levels, forms A and B.

Statistical data revealed interesting factors regarding the population measurement which are not reported elsewhere in this document. These factors are briefly summarized as follows:

(1) The entire population showed significant gain between the pre-test A and the post-test B, the pre-test being the intitial grade level placement test.

(2) There was no significant difference between males and females regarding grade level achievement: the rate of achievement tended to parallel.

(3) The data revealed the weakest area for grade level achievement to be in language. This was revealed in individual case sampling, but did not show up in the final analysis of the data.

(4) Since very few of the subjects were given all test series, final analysis of gains between primary pre-test and advanced post-test was not possible. These data were tainted by irregularities in measurement and were not reported. However, individual cases indicated more significant growth among those who took the advanced test than among those who only had the primary test. Future studies wil lbe conducted to confirm or deny this conclusion.

(5) Statistical analyses were conducted for all groupings. These data are on file in the adult education office and will be used for further research.

(6) It is the express opinion of the researcher that quantitatively different scoring would reveal specific weaknesses in the language program and in language measurement. The narratives partially explained the cultural biases inherent in these measurements. When the cultural factor is taken into account, the language portion of the measurement may indicate a positive growth factor rather than a negative dimension revealed in the data. That is, the data revealed significant weaknesses in the language portion of the measurement and these negative scores may be explained by cultural bias in the test itself.

Finally, in every single case of pre-educational experience testing and post-experience testing, there were significant and sometimes radical achievement. It appears that additional data would support the contention that these achievement gains have at least two explanations:

(1) The day-time classes had more significant growth than the night-time classes.

(2) The time factor spent in class would reveal more significant gain.

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*DHEW/OE funding came via P.L. 91-230, Sec. 309 (b), a grant from the Bureau of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education (OEG-0-72-1435).

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Table 1: Total Achievement of Adults Categorized by Class Location for Tests A and B

		Pre-Test		Post-Test		
Class	N	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	t-test
1	49	4.81	2.77	5.50	2.95	9.12*
2	28	5.66	2.58	6.44	2.74	5.28*
3	20	6.48	3.05	7.44	3.11	5.10*
4	13	4.63	2.26	5.23	2.45	5.55*
5	6	6.27	2.14	6.93	2.12	10.85*
6	17	3.17	3.05	4.32	3.24	5.51*
7	8	5.16	2.63	5.88	2.79	6.42*
8	9	5.86	2.16	6.58	2.47	3.05*
9	7	5.27	1.35	5.80	1.33	4.44*
10	9	4.61	2.94	5.61	2.98	N.S.

*Significant at .01 level of confidence

The total achievement of adults as measured by the standard test showed significant gains for all class locations. In all instances except locations 5, 7, and 9, there was at least a grade level difference between the pre-test A and the post-test B. These total scores reflect the entire sample scores. The t-test significance of the total sample tends to be indicative of consistent differences between means of the two measurements. This would tend to indicate significant growth of achievement between the two tests.

Table 2: Comparison of Achievement by Sex of Adults Completing Forms A and B

		Pre-Test		Post-Test		
Sex	N	Mean	S.D.			
Males	49	4.81	2.77	5.50	30.0	9.12*
Females	78	5.48	2.62	6.23	2.77	9.88*

*Significant at .01 level of confidence

The data indicated the mean of females, while higher than that of males, had relatively the same significant differences as indicated by the t-test. The data did not reveal why the mean scores of males were lower than those of females. What the data did reveal, however, is that both males and females tend to have similarities in standard deviations between means, thus the grade level achievements growth as revealed by the data tends to be in close proximity among both males and females.

Table 3: Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores by Subject Area for Class O[illegible] N=49

	Pre-Test A		Post-Test B		
Subject	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	t-test
Language	2.77	2.97	3.36	3.23	4.42*
Spelling	4.75	3.45	6.23	6.79	1.80*
Reading Vocabulary	5.37	5.44	5.79	5.33	3.02*
Reading Comprehension	5.71	6.10	6.54	6.30	4.33*
Math Reasoning	6.16	7.55	7.08	8.46	4.34*
Math Computation	5.85	6.00	6.94	7.81	2.91*

*Significant at .01 level of confidence

These data revealed mean scores and standard deviations by subject on both the pre-test and post-test. The data is typical of all 10 class locations, and in each instance there was a significant difference as measured by the T-test for the entire population.

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This table provides data only for pre-test A and post-test B. Additional study of the total data collection reveals that individual class locations tended to have significant gains in all subject areas except language. This was the largest group of individuals measured and the fact that there is a significant T-test for language may be partially explained in the preceding narratives.

Information for the following was taken from adult education records and from an adult education administered survey of its students.

(1) Forty-six adults earned high school equivalency certification via the GED.

(2) Seventy adults earned eighth grade equivalency certification.

(3) The program's total enrollment was 360 with a current enrollment of 252.

(4) Of the 46 adults who received high school certification, 22 enrolled in college courses.

(5) Of the same 46 adults, 32 indicated that they had received promotions or had secured different, more attractive employment as the result of their GED equivalency.

(6) Of the 120 adults who registered to vote in tribal elections since they began attending adults classes, 97 attributed their decision to do so to the adult classes.

(7) Of the 102 adults who registered to vote in county, state, and national elections, 92 attributed their decision to do so to to the adult classes.

(8) 48 adults received driver's learning permits following driver education instruction in the adult classes.

(9) 52 adults received driver's licenses following driver education instruction in the adult classes.

(10) 48 adults (aside from those who earned GEDS) indicated that they had found more attractive employment since they began attending classes and 38 of these attributed their improved status to the adult education program.

(11) 28 adults who were unemployed were assisted in finding employment by adult education staff members.

(12) 20 adults were assisted in securing additional job-related training.

(13) 11 teaching paraprofessionals on the adult education staff earned a total of 384 semester hours, applicable to a BS/BA degree.

In theory, all projects results could be quantified; it was felt, however, that efforts to measure objectively certain aspects of the program could do real harm, given the culture and traditions of the target population, i.e. to objectively record a paraprofessional's acceptance by a community would require his friends and relatives to rate him, not a very comfortable position for either of the parties to be in within the Choctaw culture. Despite this decision to not quantify all areas, significant phenomena did occur which were indicative of the positive impact of the project in the communities.

(1) The project demonstrated the positive effect federal monies can have on a population when that population both plans and controls the project.

(2) The project demonstrated the maximization of benefits which can occur when programs are operated in conjunction to other programs, thereby making additional funds and services available and avoiding expensive duplication.

(3) The paraprofessional component generated some of the program's most important achievements:

(a) By following this design (use of paraprofessionals as teachers), the limited adult education funds and program time available for developing the paraprofessional staff and for reaching the target adults were expended most effectively and productively.

(b) By using paraprofessionals as teachers in the classes, Choctaw people saw other Choctaw people assuming and performing capably in professional roles.

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(c) The paraprofessionals involved themselves in a broad range of community programs where their contributions included serving on planning committees, providing transportation for community members to community functions, and informing the community of these events. The paraprofessionals' interest in the community resulted in a heightened educational awareness among adult education students and other community members.

(d) Using bilingual paraprofessionals as teachers made bilingual instruction possible. This was certainly a factor in sustaining the relatively consistent attendance rate and the number of adults who reached their goals. (When questioned about their preference for bilingual instruction, 163 indicated that they preferred to be taught in both Choctaw and English as opposed to 40 who preferred to be taught in Choctaw only and 31 who preferred to be taught in English only.)

(e) The provision of college coursework, the requirements of inservice training, and the assignment of responsibility to the paraprofessionals contributed significantly to their emergence as competent, confident teachers and college students.

(4) The project demonstrated the efficacy of families studying together as a unit; whole families changed as they came together to the classes, learned coping skills, and became aware that they did indeed have alternatives, that they were not destined to have the same life choice forever.

(5) The acceptance of and use of the classes by the communities had a telling impact on the community's response to other educational programs. As confidence in adult education grew and interest in education was kindled, this feeling was transmitted to the student's family with a resultant increase in emphasis on education within families within communities.

(6) Readiness and need as factors in learning were clearly demonstrated when the adult students failed to respond to or utilize consumer information until they (the students) felt a real need for those facts.

(7) The project demonstrated positively, for Choctaw at least, that adults preferred the personalized attention they received when individualized instruction was utilized. When questioned, 120 indicated that they preferred to be taught singly. They further stated that they preferred to work in books which the teacher had to check rather than in books which allowed them to check their own work, suggesting again that the adult learner here desired the presence of a teacher

CONNEHATTA GRADUATES—The first GED graduates from Conehatta community, standing left, Lavada Jim, Henry Williams, and Vera Willis with their teachers Billy Chickaway and Anne Birky (standing right.)

PEARL RIVER DAY CLASS—GED student Vina Sam listens and Ben Tubby explains an algebra concept to her.

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who could be questioned, who could provide reassurance, and who could in fact anticipate his questions, none of which programmed instructional material could do.

(8) The project also demonstrated that adult education programs can increase the employability of the target population as was indicated by the adults who have been able to secure employment and/or more attractive employment.

(9) The project was also able to contribute to the coordination of the health, nutrition, and consumer information services available at Choctaw via sharing of information and personnel.

Although the program at Choctaw was a demonstration project, the innovative results of the program could not always be seen as tangible, concrete products, as a new theory of learning for adults, as specific instructional materials, or as unique teaching techniques. The significance of the program lay instead in (1) the flexibility of its administrative and instructional approach; (2) the capacity of this approach to allow for the provision of individualized non-mechanized learning experiences; (3) the portability of the program which allowed it to move into the communities where people gathered easily; and (4) its suitability to a population desiring to develop professionals via the use of indigeneous paraprofessionals who followed a career ladder which provided college coursework and a degree plan for them.

The major product of this project is the demonstration that there is no single best technique or methodology—no gimmick—which can substitute for (1) an adaptive, flexible and sensitive committment to the provision of instructional assistance to a target population and (2) the provision of such assistance in accord with the culture and priorities of that population.

OLDEST GRADUATE—Chairman Martin congratulates McKinley Jim, the oldest adult student to earn his high school diploma.

COLLEGE COURSES—Ruby Thomas, paraprofessional, preparing for one of her college classes.

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HISTORY

At the time of European contact, the Choctaw tribe was a large, prosperous people living in what is now east-central Mississippi and western Alabama. In 1540, Hernando DeSoto passed through their territory and commented on the excellence of the agriculture. At Mobile the Spanish sought to replenish exhausted supplies, but the Choctaws, under the leadership of the district chief Tascaloosa, soundly defeated them. This defeat forced DeSoto to turn north into Chickasaw country, and eventually to reach the Mississippi.

The early 1700's saw French influence in the Choctaw country increasing as outposts were erected at Mobile and other coastal sites. Despite the harsh treatment by DeSoto only 150 years earlier, the Choctaws welcomed the French. Initially the contact was advantageous to the Choctaws, as European trade goods and cultural attributes were assimilated into tribal life.

However, the French were quick to take advantage of the pivotal position of the Choctaws in international politics on the frontier. French interests lay in keeping the vital link between the outposts of Louisiana and the Canadian settlements open. This link was the Mississippi Valley, and was most fragile in the area immediately around the present Memphis, Tennessee, where the powerful military presence of the Chickasaws was most manifest. The Chickasaws and the Creeks had long been trading with the English from the Carolinas, and were their allies in the frontier struggle.

Thus, the Choctaws found themselves serving as a buffer between the lower French settlements and the Chickasaw and Creek Nations. This embroiled them in almost constant warfare, including a civil war that divided the Choctaws into English and French factions for several years.

The Choctaws found themselves no longer under "French control" following the French retreat to New Orleans and, eventually, from the lower Mississippi Valley. In rapid succession they were transferred, on paper at least, from French dominion to the Spanish, then to the British. Finally, in 1786, the first formal treaty was made between the Choctaw Nation and another power, the infant United States.

This treaty, the Treaty of Hopewell, was the first official recognition of the status of the Choctaw tribe as a nation equal to the United States and other western nations. It basically served to define the eastern boundary of the Choctaw lands, and gave little warning of the ultimate fate of tribal land.

Nine more treaties were signed between the United States between 1801 and 1830, culminating in the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek. Each treaty eroded away a portion of the tribal land base and more firmly established the land-hungry young country around the Choctaw borders. The Choctaws had always been noted agriculturalists, even among the farming tribes of the southeast. As peace settled over their land with the ending of the International Period of Southeastern history, the Choctaws had adopted in large part the dispersed farmstead settlement pattern of the American Farmer. Unfortunately, the prosperity of the Choctaw farmer only added to the greed of the Americans, already inflamed by the desire for land.

The growing pressure for tribal lands came to a head with the emergence of the concept of Removal as federal policy, advocated chiefly by Andrew Jackson. The Treaty of Doak's Stand in 1820 began the process. Over 5 million acres of Choctaw holdings were ceded in return for a small annuity and a grant of land in Arkansas and Oklahoma. No one bothered to explain to the unsubdued tribes already occupying that land that the government had given it away. No mass removal was possible, and the Choctaws refused to leave Mississippi.

Ten years later, at Dancing Rabbit Creek, the Choctaws gave in to the ever increasing pressure, which included an Act of the Mississippi legislature in 1830 that extended the laws of the state over all Indians in Mississippi. They ceded all lands in the state and agreed to Removal.

By 1832, the Choctaw tribe was officially removed from Mississippi. However, not all of the Choctaw people left the state. The present-day members of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians are descended from those who stayed in the state or who returned to their ancestral home within a short time of Removal.

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Under Article 14 and Article 19 of the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek, those who wished to stay in the state had the right to claim allocations of land and to become citizens. This land allocation plan was frustrated by the perversion of duty of the Indian Agent in charge of registering Article 14 claimants and by the maneuverings, legal and not so legal, of non-Indians.

Deprived of an individual land base and, in many cases, without adequate skills to fit easily into Mississippi society, the people retreated to marginal lands in the east-central counties and practiced a subsistence economy supplemented by day-labor jobs. As the economy shifted, many became sharecroppers for landowners.

During the period from 1830 to 1902, additional attempts were made to completely remove the Choctaws to Oklahoma. Few availed themselves of the offers, and many who did so returned later. This removal plan was finally acknowledged to have failed by the federal government in 1917, when a Senate investigating committee found the Choctaws in Mississippi living with no possible means of improving their lot. The investigation was sparked in part by stories of incredible suffering caused by disease, and the committee found that perhaps as many as 20 percent of the total Choctaw population had died in the influenza epidemic of 1917. This depopulation by disease following so soon after the final Removal of 1901-02 had totally disrupted the precarious Choctaw social system.

The Congress in 1918 appropriated funds for the establishment of a Choctaw Agency in 1918, and developed a land purchase plan for resale to Choctaw families. The land purchase was near the established concentrations of Choctaw population, and formed the nucleus of the present day seven communities.

The Agency soon broadened the scope of its services to include health, educational, and social services. The hospital and the system of federal elementary schools were established between 1921 and 1930 for the Choctaw people, but were ill-funded and not equipped to provide even basic services for the bulk of the population.[1]

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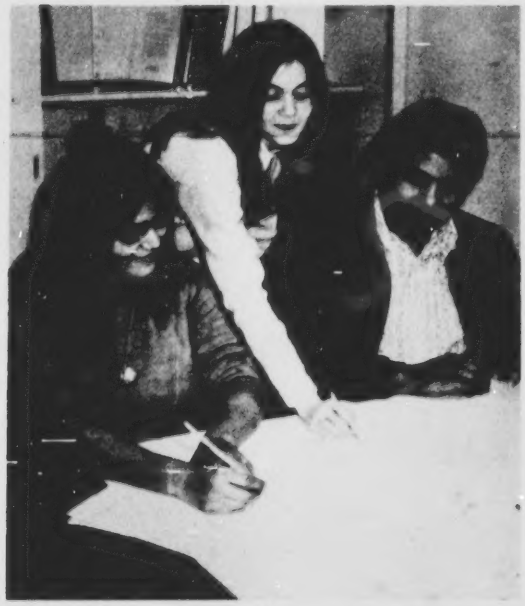
[1]The people's options—both from the standpoint of human development at the community level and in terms of individual achievement of individual potential—were severely limited by their lack of educational and employment opportunities. As the non-Indian world encroached more and more on the Choctaw communities, the effect of these limits on the day-to-day life of the Choctaw people increased, leaving them adrift in a non-Indian world without the tools to resolve the problems they were forced to encounter there.



FIRST GRADUATES—Claude and Rita Allen, the program's first graduates, discuss their plans to enter college with project director Nell Rogers. Both Mr. and Mrs. Allen are now students at Mississippi State University.

MATH CAN BE FUN—Sr. Francis Gavin and Zula Chitto in the Standing Pine class solve an interesting problem in a math book.

The Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 marked a major turning point in the history of the Mississippi Choctaws. Under its provisions, the tribe organized a tribal government for the first time since 1830. In 1935, a temporary organization called the Choctaw Business Committee was formed as the result of a vote of the Choctaw people to accept the provisions of the IRA. The committee served as the recognized tribal government until 1945 when the first tribal Constitution and Bylaws was approved. This document created the present tribal council and chairman form of government.

The Choctaw land base grew from the land purchase program initiated in the early 1920's. By an Act of Congress in 1939 this land was consolidated and declared to be held in trust by the federal government, as a result of the failure of the purchase program. Under the IRA additional land was purchased for the tribe. Finally, by a Proclamation of the Secretary of the Interior in 1944, the land purchased under the various programs was declared to be consolidated into a federal reservation for the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians.

The Choctaw Business Committee, and later the Tribal Council, was initially unable to create any major impact on tribal life, since it had no power, controlled no resources, and exercised little real influence over agency programs. This situation persisted well into the 1960's.

In the early 1960's, tribal pressure on the BIA became stronger as increasing organization developed. One of the first and most tangible results was the creation of Choctaw Central High School in 1964, which provided secondary education for Choctaw students at home rather than in Oklahoma.

This increasing voice in BIA programs for the Choctaw people coincided with other developments in the federal government, with profound impact on current reservation life. Such action as the various legislations, the establishment of the Office of Economic Opportunity, and anti-poverty programs made the most important impacts on the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians with no real interest in the welfare of Indians.

SELF-DETERMINATION

In 1966, the OEO funded the Choctaw Community Action Agency under the authority of the Tribal Council. The Choctaw people began through this Agency to exercise administrative control over their own programs to a substantial degree. This commitment of Choctaw people to regain control over tribal affairs brought about substantial changes during the last ten years as demonstrated below:

(1) The establishment of the Choctaw Community Action Agency in 1966;

(2) The establishment of CHATA Construction Company in 1970;

(3) A comprehensive reorganization of the Choctaw Tribal Government administration and program (service delivery) structure in 1971-72;

(4) The establishment of manpower development and training programs (to include adult education) in 1970-74;

(5) A certified school board with the authority to contract for operation of Bureau of Indian Affairs schools;

(6) The building of an adult corrections center and courtroom site;

(7) The establishment of extensive early childhood, mental health, and health service programs in 1972-74;

(8) The building of three community facility buildings and a swimming pool;

(9) The building of lighted softball parks in six Choctaw communities;

(10) The completion of an industrial park in 1973;

(11) The establishment of a department of continuing education in 1974;

(12) The enrollment of more than 100 Choctaw people in institutions of higher education;

(13) The funding of and beginning construction of a comprehensive health facility and hospital for Choctaw.

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During FY '72, the Choctaw Tribal Council coordinated the development and implementation of a comprehensive tribal government reorganization plan to promote more effective governing processes expected to expand tribal council control over programs and services operated on the Choctaw Reservation. This plan was designed in accordance with the federal government's commitment of self-determination for Indian people. The broad program priorities set by the Tribal Council emphasized the development of plans and project designed with the following in mind:

(1) Increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of all tribal programs and reorganizing the Choctaw Tribal Government system;

(2) Meeting the manpower development, economic development, community development, educational and health needs of the Choctaw tribe;

(3) Approximating as nearly as possible the optimal utilization of Tribal resources;

(4) Enabling the Tribal Council to position itself to administer and operate on a contractual basis all federal programs that are now conducted by other agencies for the benefit of the Tribe.

Today's Choctaw Tribal Council utilized the capacities and insights of the Choctaw people as they developed plans and proposals moving toward Choctaw Self-Determination. The Tribal government was determined to provide increased reservation opportunities in such vital areas as health, education, economic development and housing.

EDUCATION

Many of the social and economic problems of Choctaw's past and present were attributed to federal, state and local neglect in education: Choctaw people, with few exceptions[2], were systematically denied educational opportunities from the 1830's until the establishment of federal schools in the 1920's. Even then, educational programs were limited to the lower grades with emphasis on agricultural subjects.

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[2]A few Mississippi counties, if the size of the Choctaw population justified (by county standards), maintained schools, paying a Choctaw teacher twenty-five dollars per month for four months each year. The Catholic Diocese of Natchez opened a mission with a school in 1884 in one of the Choctaw Communities. Unfortunately, a final attempt at removing the remaining Choctaw people to Oklahoma occurred in 1903 and 1904, and these schools were closed shortly thereafter (the mission Holy Rosary, in the Tucker Community, continued to operate.)

CHECKING WORK—Lena Denson (right) checks the work of Una Denson in the Standing Pine night class.

GED STUDENT—Fannie Billie, GED student at Standing Pine, prepares for her examination with Sr. Frances Gavin. Clifton Lewis (in the back) is also a GED student.

0015

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Since 1960, Choctaw Tribal Council efforts were used to force considerable expansion of BIA operated schools, with many new buildings replacing old and/or obsolete ones. The first (and only) high school opened in 1964. Previously, any student who wished to continue through high school was forced to attend schools in Oklahoma or Kansas. Since its opening, Choctaw Central High School has expanded to a total of nine modern buildings, including two dormitories which house students from communities too far away from the school for daily busing. In addition to the required curriculum, the school offers commercial courses, exploratory vocational subjects and several Title programs, i.e. remedial reading, special dyslexia instruction, remedial mathematics, special education, and bilingual music.

In the area of early childhood education, Tribal leaders in 1968 convinced the national Follow-Through program of the need for new approaches for teaching Choctaw lower elementary children. In that year, Choctaw's Follow-Through Program was funded and continued through the present to serve all children in kindergarten through third grade.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

In 1971, the Tribal Council received funding for a Headstart Program which had centers in each community. Two other early childhood programs, Family Education and a BIA funded Parent Child Development Program (which includes both day care centers and day care homes) were funded in 1972 and 1973 respectively, and were operated by the Tribal Council.

ADULT EDUCATION

At the same time that it was seeking avenues to improve early childhood education, the Tribal Council was also cognizant of the socio-economic problems which adversely affected the adult members of the tribe, As a result of first nonexistent and later inadequate educational opportunities, many adults at Choctaw had no marketable skills and some, in fact, lacked even those basic reading and computation skills which allowed them to enter and function successfully in manpower development programs as well as secure private sector employment.[3] Consequently, unemployment and underemployment with their attendant social problems existed to the detriment of Choctaw's population. Those conditions were further aggravated by the unscrupulous and/or confusing business practices that tribal members as consumers often encountered. In recognition of these serious problems, Tribal Chairman Phillip Martin and the Tribal Council felt that their overall goal of improving the quality of life for all Choctaw people could be facilitated by the establishment of a tribally controlled AE program designed in accord with the tribal philosophy of self-determination.[4] Such a program would not only give the adults an opportunity to continue learning but would also enhance the employability of tribal members. More importantly, the Tribal Council felt that an effective adult education program could foster the development of coping skills necessary for functioning in a complex world and would, thereby, generate upward mobility among the Choctaw people. Further, the tribal government was not content to merely improve its members' ability to cope with the world about them; they sought, rather, to have the people increase their capacity to control their environment, to, in effect, change the status quo—both on and off the reservation. Accordingly, the tribe designed its adult education program with two distinct goals in mind:

(1) Increasing the capacity of the Choctaw people, as individuals, to assess and resolve the problems they were most likely to encounter in the non-Indian world;

(2) Increasing the capacity of Choctaw people, as a tribe, to secure control of the reservation and of tribal affairs.

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[3]The model number of years of school completed by Choctaw people over 45 years of age is zero. Almost one-third of the Choctaw heads of households have completed less than one year of school while less than 4.3 percent of all households have a head of household who has completed high school. Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, **The Choctaw Higher Education Development Project**, June, 1974, p. 3.

[4]The philosophy of self-determination as defined by the Choctaw tribal government to guide its actions follows: "Reservation development is most likely to be positive and lasting from the standpoint of the Indian people when it results from action by Indians for Indians, supported by technical and financial assistance which is answerable directly to the Indian tribal government which initiates such action." Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, **First Annual Report of the Choctaw Self-Determination Project: 1971-72.** p. 14.

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The existing BIA-operated adult education program had had very little success up to that point in achieving the first goal, as the level of BIA funding and staffing was simply inadequate for the task to be accomplished (only two teachers were employed to serve the seven Choctaw communities). Beyond that, the BIA program was not structured in recognition of language and cultural differences, i.e. no bilingual instructors were employed.[5]

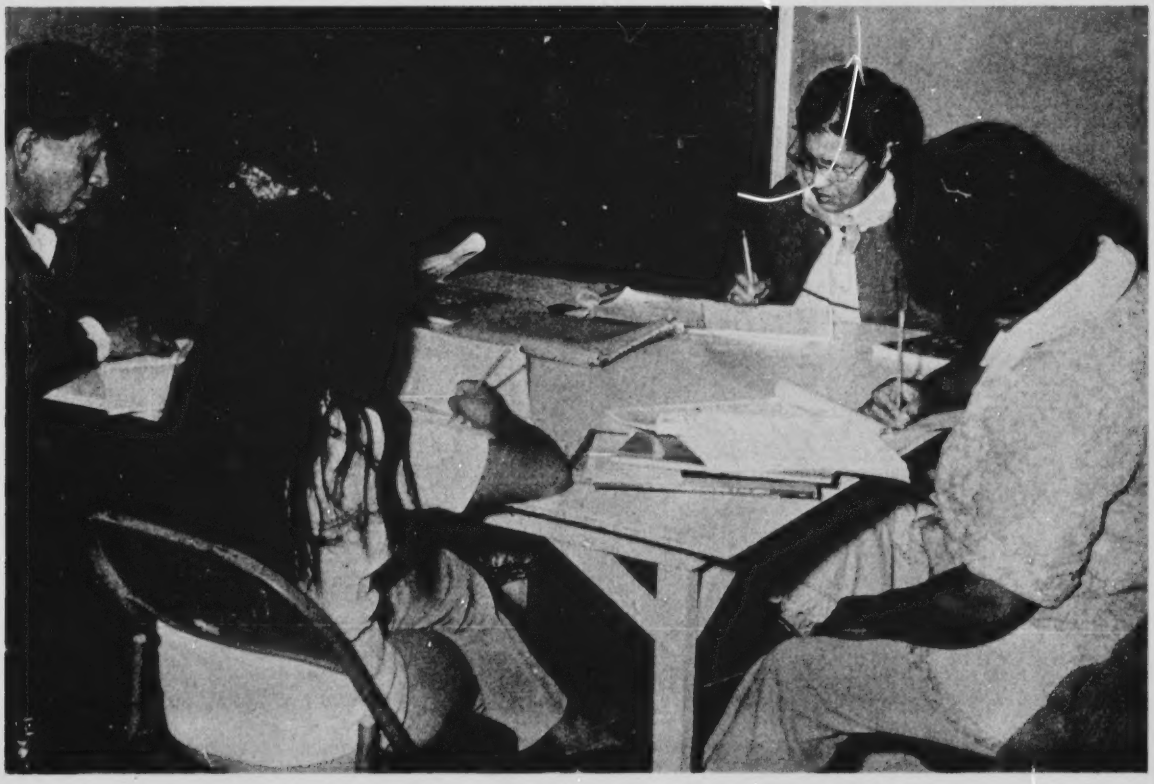
Even if the BIA Adult Education Program had been given sufficient resources to achieve the first goal, it would never have achieved the second — for the same reason that reservation development had been retarded in the past: bureaucracies, no matter how well intentioned, tended inevitably to maintain status quo conditions among the target population. In view of this fact and in accordance with its previously noted concept of self-determination, the Tribal Council recognized that only through tribal control could its second goal be realized. It then resolved in August, 1971, (Resolution CHO 18072, Aug. 16, 1971) to request that BIA transfer control of and responsibility for the adult education program to the Choctaw Tribal Government.

Once contract negotiations with BIA were finalized, the council began an effort for consortium funding which allowed for the design and implementation of an adult education program planned specifically to reflect the cultural attributes of the Choctaw adults and at the same time to achieve the goals delineated by the council.

Funding from both the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of Education, Division of Adult and Vocational Education—309 (B) monies —was secured by the tribal council in 1972 and the program began in July of that year.

* * * * *

[5]The program was a small, traditional one which relied heavily on the use of locally gathered instructional materials, some commercial worktexts, the use of field trips to nearby towns and factories, and the use of films and records. In the early seventies, another BIA sponsored adult education program operating in a town approximately 50 miles from Choctaw also failed to produce any marked change in the educational level of the adults here. This program demanded a long bus ride and was learning-laboratory oriented. For the adults, all of whom spoke English as a second language, the tapes and other programmed instructional material were difficult to work with. Too, the depersonalization of a learning laboratory with its cubicles was not conducive to developing a non-threatening atmosphere for those attending the classes.



CONEHATTA GROUP—Adults who attend classes in Conehatta include (from far left) Murphy Solomon, Louise Denson, Mallie Smith, Laura Hernandez and Patsy Tubby.

0017

Since its inception in 1972, Choctaw Adult Education functioned successfully, producing quantifiable, almost immediate results. Its ease of operation and its achievements have been such that the program staff, Chairman Martin and the Tribal Council believed the program design could be easily replicated by other groups seeking to reach target populations via a community-based program.

To facilitate such adoption, then, the remainder of this final project report was designed as a manual describing in detail Choctaw's adult education plan.

TUCKER NIGHT CLASS—Debbie Kirk is shown with one of the student groups attending Tucker's night class.

0018

PROGRAM INTENT

Objectives of the project were based on the concept that the program would place equal emphasis upon (1) the delivery of effective client services and (2) the development of professionals from among the client population served by the program. The commitment to the latter was prompted by the dearth of Indian professionals available to work within the Indian communities[6] and the belief that Indian professionals could generate a greater impact on the clients and communities which they served than could non-Indian professionals. Further, the ultimate achievement of the second goal indicated earlier (substitution of tribal control for federal management of the Choctaw Reservation) could not be fully achieved until the bulk of the professional/technical positions within the tribe were held by tribal members.

The client population was defined as an unselected cross section of bilingual American Indians, members of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians living in six of the seven Choctaw communities in East Central Mississippi. Of the 3900 Choctaw people now resident in Mississippi, approximately 3800 live in these communities (see figures 1 and 2). As of September, 1974, the unemployment rate stood at 36 percent of the Choctaw labor force.[7] Of those who were employed, 47 percent were unskilled laborers, 38 percent were semiskilled, and only 1 percent were professionals[8] (further the individual's access to employment was often hampered by his not having a Mississippi driver's license). Over 56 percent of these households had an annual total cash income of under $3000 and over 81 percent had less than $5000 (per capita income in 1973 was only $1012).[9] The general educational and occupational skill level was low: in 1971, when Choctaw Adult Education began, 63 percent of the population had completed third grade; 26 percent had completed eighth grade; and only 9 percent had completed twelfth grade.[10] Family use of English was considered fair to poor in 75 percent of the households with Choctaw being the primary language of communication in over 85 percent of the homes[11] (see tables 1 and 2 for a breakdown on the years of schooling completed and the adults' reasons for only completing that level).

The program effort was directed in actuality toward two sets of goals: the short term objectives listed in the proposal and the longer term objectives sought by the Tribal Council for the Choctaw people.

STATED PROPOSAL OBJECTIVES

The stated proposal objectives were the following (these objectives were derivatives of the first level goal cited in the History Section):

(1) The establishment of learning centers within the Choctaw communities.

(2) The increase of each participant's reading level by at least 1.0 grade level as measured by comparing his scores on the Gray-Votaw-Rogers General Achievement Test series per each 12 months (the successful achievement of this objective will be evaluated relative to the participant's level of reading skills upon entry and the regularity of his attendance).

(3) The increase of each participant's computation skills by at least 1.0 grade level as measured by comparing his scores on the Gray-Votaw-Rogers General Achievement Test series per each 12 months (the successful achievement of this objective will be evaluated relative to the participant's level of computation skills and the regularity of his attendance).

(4) The acquisition, by those clients who so desire, of a Mississippi driver's license.

(5) The development of a body of learning materials which takes into account the interest of the participant, his culture, and his needs.

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[6]In 1972 only 22 Mississippi Choctaws had ever completed college.

[7]The Choctaw Manpower and Demographic Survey. (unpublished) September, 1974.

[8]Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, **Program Narrative: Choctaw On-Campus Intensive Education Program, Academic Year, 1974-1975**, p. 1.

[9]Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, **Program Narrative: Choctaw On-Campus Intensive Education Program, Academic year, 1974-1975**, p. 1.

[10]**Abstract of Mississippi Choctaw Adult Educational and Occupational/Manpower Deficiencies: Current Status and Proposed Remedial Action**, p. 4.

[11]**Program Narrative: Choctaw On-Campus Intensive Education Program, Academic Year 1974-1975.**

(6) The assessment of learning materials adaptable to the Choctaw adult. (Initially, it had been suggested that materials be developed in the Choctaw language; that language, however, while spoken by the entire population, is read by very few people at Choctaw. Fewer people still can write the language. Such an objective would have been difficult to accomplish without the assistance of a linguist.)[12] This objective was modified to the task of selecting learning materials written in English on the basis of their compatibility with the Choctaw people.

TRIBAL OBJECTIVES

Program objectives as perceived from the tribal government's point of view follow (these objectives were derivatives of the second level goal cited in the History Section):

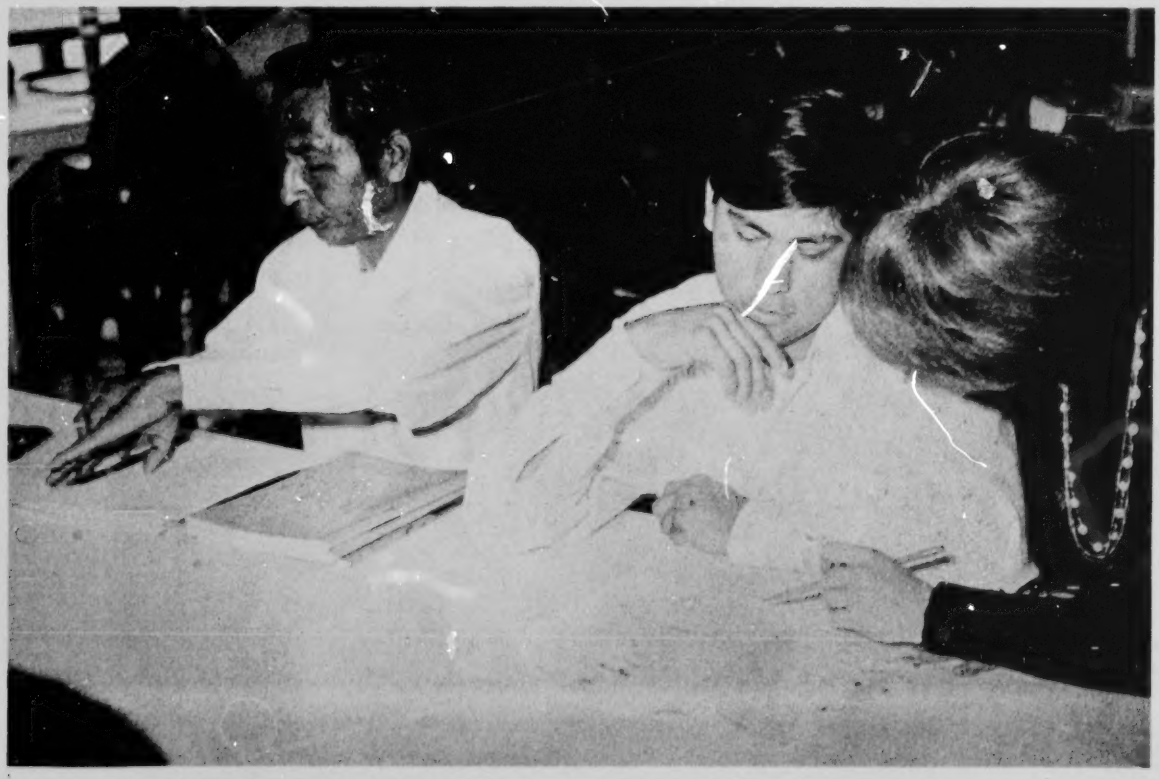
(1) Via the adult classes, the communities will become more aware of and experience a decrease in the community problems that result from illiteracy combined with a lack of knowledge of consumer skills, legal rights, nutritional and health practices as measured by the number of adults who attend the classes and raise questions, as measured by the mention of such concerns in community meetings, and as measured by real decreases in some problems.

(2) The Choctaw paraprofessionals will assume positions of leadership as educational change agents in their communities as measured by their participation on educational and/or planning committees, their election to leadership positions within various community groups, and their perception of long term educational needs within the community.

(3) The career ladder for Choctaw praprofessionals incorporated into the program will ultimately produce accredited teachers with a BS/BA degree.

(4) The program will coordinate its activities with those of other tribal agencies so as to maximize expenditures of available monies.

[12]A bilingual project recently begun at Choctaw was viewed as the most effective way of achieving written literacy in Choctaw both for elementary and high school students and for the adult population.



TESTING AT CONEHATTA—Anne Birky, right, goes over directions for the general achievement test (given every six months in the classes) with (left) Dewey Thomas and LeRoy Williams.

0020

(5) The basic skills and concepts acquired in adult education by members of the target population will provide the tribal government, as an employer, with more knowledgeable, efficient employees.

(6) The self-discipline required by the adult participants, i.e. regular class attendance, completion of assignments, will carry over into their work habits and reinforce regular work attendance, diligence, and initiative.

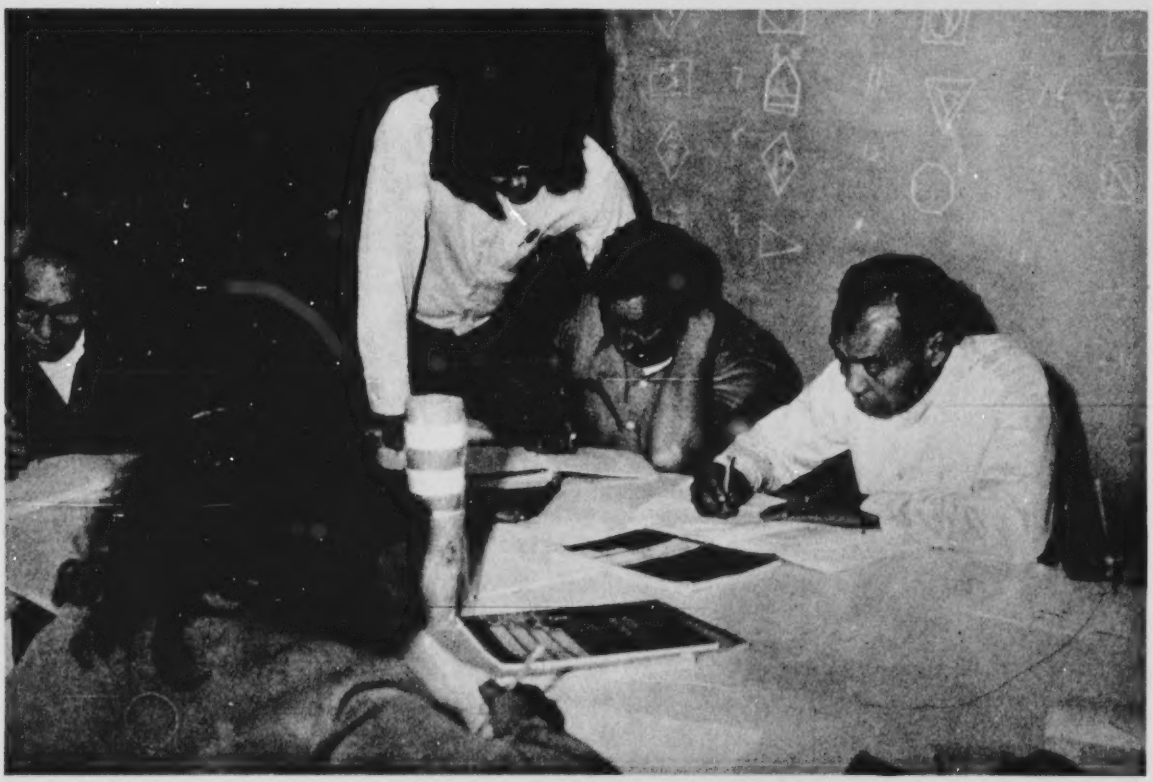
(7) By channeling more citizens into the labor force, the demand on tribal, BIA, and Indian Health service budgets for social services (welfare assistance) will be lessened and more resources can be devoted to the improvement of general community facilities and the operation of community wide (non-welfare) programs.

(8) The example set by adults who attend the classes will encourage school-age children to stay in school and continue their education, even beyond the secondary level.

(9) An increase in the basic educational level of the general population will allow the tribe to seek out and encourage private enterprise to locate, expand and/or invest in industry on the reservation.

(10) The efficient administration of a contracted program such as adult education will strengthen the tribe's case for the administration of other Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Indian Health Service projects.

Realization of a number of the program objectives have of course already occurred, and the results are detailed throughout the remainder of this narrative; efforts to achieve the remainder of the long-term goals are in progress and the results may not be evident for a number of years.



ROADSIGNS—Conehatta students take a practice test on roadsigns following driver education instruction by Troy Chickaway. From left are Hinton Anderson, Houston Anderson, Troy Chickaway, and Otto Jefferson.

DESIGN

COMMUNITY COMPONENTS

Choctaw adult education's delivery system was designed to give the adults access to an educational program in their own communities. Initially, these learning centers[13] were established in the four largest Choctaw communities so that personal attention and instruction would be available to most of the people several evenings each week. Each center was open for two, three-hour flexibly scheduled evening sessions per week. Initial response to the program was so great that evening classes were opened in two other communities and day classes (which met six hours per session, one day each week) were also established in the four larger communities.

CLASS SITES AND PHYSICAL FACILITIES

The classes were held in BIA schools, in tribal neighborhood facility buildings, and in churches. (In most of these buildings, inadequate lighting and seating, i.e. child-size and/or uncomfortable chairs, lack of privacy for personal counseling, poor acoustics, and overcrowding were matters of concern for the program personnel. In fact, none of the classes, with one exception, had its own classroom where supplies could be stored, students could leave books, and magazines and books could be left for the students to browse through at their leisure.)

The fact, however, that adults did meet and were willing to meet under such adverse conditions indicated the portability of the program and also suggested that this plan did and could work wherever meeting places could be established.

There were, though, certain physical elements which, when available, contributed to the establishment of a comfortable, non-threatening climate for learning. These follow:

(1) Lighting was a most important consideration in choosing a class site. Rather than accepting any free room for classes, all possibilities were exhausted in securing a classroom with the best natural and artificial lighting. (Whether or not lighting is adequate often determined which adults attended class regularly or at all, which adults remained most attentive to their studies, and which adults had greater attention spans.)

(2) Seating arrangements allowed the adults to sit informally around tables; never, unless absolutely necessary, were adults forced to sit in traditional desks, arranged in rigid, straight rows. Tables allowed the participants to spread their books and papers comfortably and imparted a sense of togetherness to the adults, rather than the sense of separation and formality that straight rows of chairs often suggested. Too, padded chairs were preferred to hard, metal ones.

(3) Basic classroom furnishings needed at a minimum were a chalk board (several, small folding ones work best), a corkboard, bookshelves, a locking filing cabinet, a pencil sharpener, and ashtrays for each table.

(4) Basic classroom supplies kept on hand included the following: large diameter primary pencils; ordinary No. 2 lead pencils; ball point pens; wide-ruled primary paper; composition notebooks (to be used as vocabulary notebooks); rubber bands—several sizes—(students liked to use these to hold their worktexts and notebooks together); a stapler and staples; paper clips, scratch paper for working math problems; dictionaries (elementary, intermediate, collegiate, and picture for beginning readers); dictionaries of synonyms, antonyms, and homonyms; world and USA maps; encyclopedias; a globe; supplementary reading material on all levels; student enrollment forms; diagnostic tests; alphabet charts; chalk and erasers; illustrated charts, i.e. science concepts, colors, pictures (particularly photos of current and historical Indian leaders); mathematics flash cards; counting beads; extra copies of students' worktexts.

(5) It was also necessary for the adults to have access to telephone service. Parents were more likely to attend if they knew they could be reached by telephone. Adequate restroom facilities were necessary.

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[13]The term, learning centers, is not used in its usual sense in this report; here, it merely means a class established in a community rather than a permanent site stocked with learning material and open at all times. Physical space for such centers is simply not available at Choctaw. Each class must meet in multi-purpose facilities and be subject to moving at any time.

0022

(6) Opportunities for socialization within the classes served several significant purposes; the breaks allowed the students to relax from the tensions of their day. Most had worked all day and were tired when they reached the class. Free coffee provided by the program and snacks prepared and brought by the students enabled the adults to refresh themselves, to engage in informal conversation with other members of the class and with the teachers, and, in so doing, to establish an esprit which contributed to the program's high retention rate. Also, for several sectors of the population, such as older people, the adult classes represented the only organized social outlet other than the churches that was available. As such, the importance of the socialization aspect of the program was recognized and nurtured.

CLASS SITES AND STAFFING

Below is a listing of the classes which operated in each community, the average educational grade level of each class when the program began, the average attendance, and the number of teachers and paraprofessionals assigned there.

Class	Average Educational Grade Level	Average Attendance	Staff Assignments
Bogue Chitto Day	1.1	32	6
Bogue Chitto Night	2.1	20	3
Conehatta Day	5.1	27	4
Conehatta Night	2.8	16	3
Pearl River Day	4.1	48	8
Pearl River Night	4.7	15	3
Red Water Day	3.7	21	3
Red Water Night	5.0	8	1
Standing Pine Night	4.8	19	3
Tucker Night	4.5	18	2

ARTS AND CRAFTS—Mary Lou Farmer (right) shows Edwena Anderson how she pieces a fan-pattern quilt. Students in the Conehatta night class spent one hour per week working on a quilt.

PARAPROFESSIONAL COMPONENT

In keeping with the tribal goal of self-determination, the adult education program was designed to implement a career development plan which would move the Choctaw paraprofessionals from that status to professional status via college coursework, work experience, and intensive in-service training.

This plan, the paraprofessional component, emerged as one of the most significant achievements of Choctaw's adult education program.

CAREER LADDER

Aside from its primary goal of developing Choctaw professionals, it was felt that a well-planned career ladder could also attribute to an increasingly competent paraprofessional staff, a decrease in staff turnover, the establishment of personal and program related occupational goals for paraprofessionals, a means of rewarding excellence as an incentive to paraprofessional development, and a means of increasing staff security.

In addition to the above considerations, three other quite important factors were taken into account during the planning stages of a career development plan:

(1) The plan was to be one through which the paraprofessional advanced from various entry level jobs into higher paying, more responsible positions (increases in salary must accompany increase in responsibility; otherwise the plan will not work).

(2) The plan specified that the paraprofessional complete some designated amount of training or education in order to qualify for advancement to a "higher" level.

(3) The plan was designed in recognition of specific program differences and goals and reflected the needs and limitations of the client population, of the individual paraprofessional, of the supervisory professionals, and of the programs themselves.

Further, Choctaw's career development plan clearly did not allow the paraprofessional to be merely aides to the professional teachers; instead, considerable independent decision making and unsupervised work was expected of the paraprofessionals; and, on the job, the distinction between the professional and the paraprofessional was generally blurred. The paraprofessional was expected to function essentially as a teacher; he was assigned a group of students to plan for, to select learning material for, to evaluate, and to teach.

Described below were the steps in the career ladder (the role the paraprofessional was expected to play as well as the paraprofessional training plan will be detailed in the sections on staff selection and assignment and training, respectively).

	Educational Requirement	Salary
ENTRY LEVEL	High school graduate or high school equivalency certificate	Entry level
JUNIOR TEACHER I	Completion of 32 semester hours college coursework/one to one and one-half years' work experience with program	$500 per annum above entry level
JUNIOR TEACHER II	Completion of 56-60 semester hours; one and one-half to two and one-half years' experience with the program	$1,000 above entry level
TEACHER	Completion of BS/BA degree and teacher certification	$4,000-$5,000 above entry level

Aside from the salary increments listed, the paraprofessionals were given time off from work to attend 9-12 hours of tuition-paid (by the program) college coursework as well as reimbursement for the cost of books, and for travel expenses encountered while coming to and from the classes.

0024

STAFFING

Staffing, for any program, was always a crucial factor in determining whether or not a program's objectives could be met; but, for a program such as Choctaw Adult Education whose success hinged essentially upon the rapport established between the staff and members of the target population and between the professionals and paraprofessionals, staff selection was approached with extreme care, with much attention given to the prospective employee's academic background, work experience, potential for flexibility, ability to relate to a variety of personality types, and ability to handle crisis situations.

This section of the report, then, will outline the staff positions that existed within the Choctaw Adult Education Program, the competencies required for each, and the responsibilities each staff member was expected to perform.

Thirteen staff members were hired at the program's inception: one teacher/director, four teachers (center directors), seven paraprofessionals, and one part-time secretary. Later in the program year, due to resignations by three teachers, the program operated at times with two or three teachers (which, given the client load) was an impossible situation.

As enrollment increased, the staff was increased to meet the center demands for additional personnel,[14] including one full-time director, four teachers, one full-time secretary (necessary to handle the paper work generated by the driver education and teacher training components of the program), and nine paraprofessionals (three of whom are junior teachers).

In the selection of the staff, particularly the selection of teachers and paraprofessionals, certain aspects of the work were clearly communicated: the classes were located in six relatively remote sections, all in rural communities and very often on bad roads which became impassable during certain periods of the year; the project required a regular schedule of afternoon and night work, with considerable weekend activity to be expected. Thus, individuals with a high degree of mobility and the ability to change work schedules on short notice to meet the demands of the learning centers was required. The staff members were expected to be empathetic to the problems of the students to be committed to the concept of Self-Determination for the Choctaw people, and to be able to face problems with a realistic, yet optimistic attitude. Furthermore, it was imperative that the staff respect the traditional culture of the Choctaw people and abide by the mores of each community.

For those staff members who held supervisory positions, the supervisory approach employed here was a democratic, participatory one in which the staff discussed mutual problems and arrived at solutions to the same. If individual staff members encountered difficulties or failed to perform their jobs as required, counseling rather than chastisement was utilized to eliminate these areas of concern. Adherance to this approach resulted in a comfortable, serious interchange among staff with relation to the program's operation and the evolution of a well-trained, committed cadre of teachers who accepted what their roles were to be.

Finally, all professional staff members were expected to accept and actively support the program's career ladder for its paraprofessionals.

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[14]It is appropriate to note here the immense contribution members of the Mennonite Voluntary Service Unit at Choctaw made to the successful operation of this program: during 1972 and most of 1973, three teachers—two full-time and one part-time—worked with adult education (now, one teacher working with the program is a member of the unit and the unit hostess provides child care assistance at Tucker center). Without the VS Unit's assistance, two of the evening centers probably could not have been opened. This presence of additional teaching personnel enabled students in the overcrowded classes to progress much more rapidly than they would have been able to do so with the staff available.

For many of the reasons listed above, the Franciscan Sisters of Alleghany, N.Y. were invaluable also to the program's delivery of services. In 1973, following the return to their homes by two Mennonite Volunteers, a Franciscan Sister arrived to replace these teachers, thereby enabling the continued operation of two centers. Another Sister's coming in 1974 allowed the opening of still another adult learning center. Furthermore, the location of the Sister's Convent near one of the more distant Choctaw Communities meant that home visitation and community contact there could be measurably increased since a teacher did not have to travel 40-50 miles to accomplish same.

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THE TEACHER

COMPETENCIES[15]

The successful adult education teacher at Choctaw has been one who was (1) flexible, trained, and interested; (2) had a broad subject matter background including mathematics and science;[16] (3) was interested in improving the coping skills of the target population; (4) was warm and accepting; (5) was able to empathize with the clients without feeling sorry for them; (6) was able to establish a climate for learning in a cross-cultural situation; (7) and was cognizant of and prepared to cope with the problems the adults brought to the class.

Basic employment requirements were a BS/BA degree and teacher certification; one-two years' teaching experience, preferably with adults; a strong academic background in the following, listed in the order of preference: English, reading, mathematics, health and/or nutrition education, science; and a satisfactory score on a general achievement test, administered upon application for the position. (Note: If the target population were predominantly English-speaking, the importance of having someone with a thorough knowledge of English grammar was diminished; otherwise, this was an essential skill if the teacher were preparing students for the English section on the GED.)

Among the competencies considered appropriate for the teachers were these:

has knowledge of the theory and practice of teaching adults;
has knowledge of and experience in program development;
has knowledge of the social structure and characteristics of the Choctaw communities;
believes that innovation is necessary and desirable for the growth of adult learning;

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[15]Sections describing competencies will also include a description of certain attitudinal attributes felt to be necessary.

[16]The importance of selecting intelligent, creative teachers with strong academic backgrounds, decision-making ability and initiative cannot be over-emphasized, particularly if that teacher will be working with GED level students. In such a program as this, one cannot afford to employ teachers who have to be trained after they come to work.

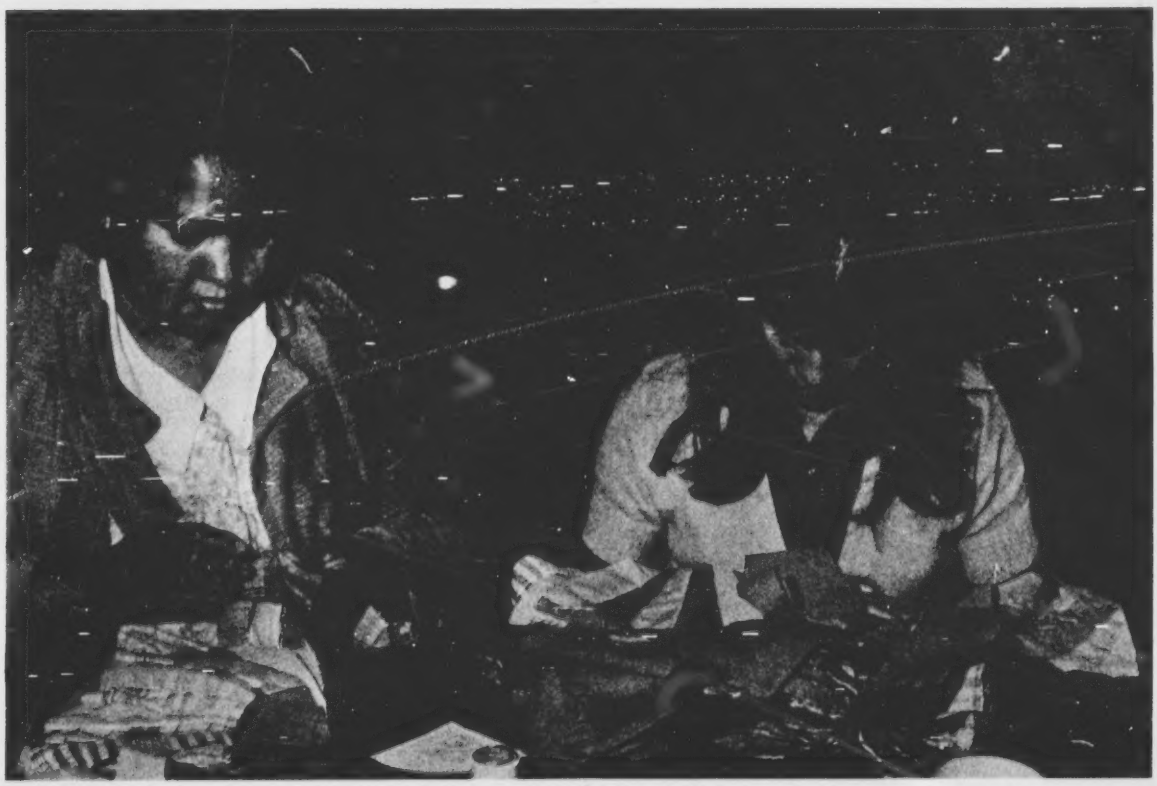
GRADUATION ENTERTAINERS— Chairman Martins listens as Wagon Amos (left) and Henry Joe entertain students and their guests at an adult education graduation. (Mr. Amos is also a student in the Bogue Chitto day class.

0026

possesses skills to effectively relate oneself to the students and community;
has knowledge about adult home skills and consumer education and recognizes the importance of each;
has a commitment to keep up to date on new developments in content areas;
has knowledge of social and cultural forces that influence adult learning;
has knowledge of methods and materials for teaching arithmetic and reading to adults.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Teachers assigned to each center were responsible for the following:
providing information about the program to the community;
organizing a plan of skill instruction that demonstrated sequence, continuity, and integration;
planning instruction to begin at the student's learning level;
adapting instruction to the background of the student;
utilizing a system whereby student and teacher jointly set objectives and planned learning experiences;
operating the learning center to include assignments of staff within each center;
organizing classes for maximum effectiveness;
supervising and training paraprofessionals at each center;
evaluating staff and students;
establishing and maintaining individual student files;
developing instructional material;
coordinating center activities with those of other programs;
teaching in the classes;
informing program director of any relevant developments and/or concerns;
tutoring paraprofessionals in college coursework when necessary;
establishing and maintaining community rapport via contact with community leaders and visitation within the community;
attending community meetings and social functions.



QUILTING—Ruby Thomas (right) and adult education student Laura Hernandez finalize squares for a quilt top which the class members at Conehatta made as an arts and crafts project.

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PARAPROFESSIONAL

COMPETENCIES

The paraprofessionals—both the junior teachers and classroom aides—were invaluable as links between the community and the adult education program. They, working as teachers, were highly visible in each community. Most were interested in community development and participated actively in various community groups, especially those educational in nature, i.e. Headstart parents' groups, Follow Through parent advisory committees, and community development clubs. Such involvement was consistent with program philosophy and work, and class schedules were adjusted to allow the paraprofessionals to participate in these activities. Whenever possible, the paraprofessionals employed were successful adult education students who had received their high school equivalency via GED testing. Further, the paraprofessionals were assigned to work in the community in which they were from; selection of the paraprofessional also was based upon that individual's ability to hold the respect of both older and younger age groups within the community as he was the staff member with whom the community identified most readily and most frequently with adult education.[17]

The basic education requirement was a high school diploma or GED certificate; some work experience with an education program was preferable; and satisfactory scores on a general achievement test, administered upon application for the job was required.

Among the competencies considered appropriate for the paraprofessional were these:

has knowledge of the fundamental skills of communication (reading, writing, and spelling);
has knowledge of the primary comprehension skills;
has knowledge of practical arithmetic skills;
has knowledge of adult home-life skills;
has knowledge of and possession of interpersonal skills so that he can effectively relate to students, community and staff members;
has knowledge of the agencies found within the community which can assist the student.

RESPONSIBILITIES

All paraprofessionals were responsible for the following:
providing instruction to an assigned group of students;
making and following lesson plans;
assuming responsibility when the center director is absent;
developing learning objectives with students;
developing instructional material;
assisting with student evaluation;
keeping accurate records of each student;
recruiting new students;
visiting in the community;
working with community agencies to assist students;
assisting teacher with communication;
attending 9-12 hours college courses each semester and preparing all assigned work for such courses;
providing transportation for students to and from classes;
assisting in extracurricular program, community and reservation wide activities.

The junior teachers, however, had the additional responsibilities of teaching more classes, of teaching GED-level students in addition to other levels, and of being in charge of a learning center with paraprofessionals to supervise. The junior teachers were also expected to assist in staff training and evaluation.

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[17]This point was a most important consideration in staffing as it was most difficult to identify potential staff members who held the respect of both young and old community members. If the elders had complaints about the teacher, then they and their families were not likely to attend; if the younger people were not impressed by the staff member, they were unlikely to accept him as a teacher. Before hiring occured, representative community members were consulted about an applicant's suitability.

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PROGRAM DIRECTOR

COMPETENCIES

The program director's role here was a multifaceted one, demanding that the person function as an administrator, curriculum development specialist, supervisor of instruction and counselor. How well the director filled this role was dependent upon his personal knowledge of the communities, their real needs and real problems. And, before the individual and community needs could be accommodated through educational means, several concurrent efforts on the part of the director became necessary.

(1) The establishment and maintenance of a personal acquaintanceship with community leaders.

(2) The establishment, identification with and utilization of existing community organizations and groups—all of which provided insights into the community as well as served as a base from which to disseminate information.

(3) The acquisition of a general knowledge of the population characteristics, institutional structure, value systems, economic base, and power structure of the communities via contact with tribal leaders and individual community members.

(4) Teaching in the classes, displaying the same competencies expected of the classroom teachers. (This is an extremely important point. Without having worked as a teacher in the adult classes, it was difficult for the director to perceive both staff and student needs. Teaching also allowed the director constant opportunities to observe and evaluate staff performance.)

(5) Participation on a regular basis in community functions—both social and non-social.

(6) Regular visitation of the adult students and potential students at home and the active solicitation of their opinion on the program and its effectiveness.

PEARL RIVER DAY CLASS—George Isaac, Bonnie Dan, junior teacher Troy Chickaway and Lewis Tubby (from left to right) spend a morning of serious study at the Pearl River Day Class.

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Basic employment requirements were a BS/BA degree and teacher certification, with preference given to individuals with a master's degree in adult and continuing education; one-two years' teaching experience in adult education; a strong academic background to include language arts, math, science, and consumer education; and satisfactory scores on a general achievement test, administered upon application for the position.

Among the competencies considered appropriate for the director were the following:.
has knowledge of the theory and practice of teaching in adult education;
has knowledge of recruiting the adult as a learner;
has knowledge of theory and practice of program development;
has knowledge of the nature of adult education legislation;
can use the techniques of public relations;
has knowledge of the processes of learning for adults;
has knowledge of the characteristics of the adult learner;
has a commitment to continuing learning;
has knowledge about adult home life skills and consumer education;
has knowledge of federal funding procedures;
can adapt a curriculum to the needs of adult learners;
has knowledge of and experience in developing instructional materials suitable for the target population;
has knowledge of and experience in developing degree plans for paraprofessionals;
has knowledge of and experience in applying both personal and academic counseling techniques;
has knowledge of the suitability of commercial materials for adult learning;
has knowledge of and experience in providing in-service education for adult education instructional staff members;
has knowledge of and experience in applying both formal and informal evaluative tools;
has knowledge of and experience in interpreting evaluative data;
has knowledge of and experience in maintaining a record keeping system;
has knowledge of and experience in applying organizational skills;
has knowledge of and experience in administration, budget management, and proposal preparation.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The director was responsible for the following:

selecting, supervising, and training a staff of 15;
selecting and purchasing materials and supplies;
scheduling classes in all communities and making staff assignments to same;
arranging college coursework for the paraprofessionals, providing career counseling for same and tutoring those individuals in their coursework;
securing physical facilities and a means of transportation for all classes;
traveling throughout the communities in order to maintain contact with community leaders on a regular basis in order to ascertain how the community views the program;
supervising and coordinating the activities of the driver education instructor with those of adult education;
arranging for non-paraprofessional staff members to enroll in and attend university graduate courses in adult education;
substituting for teachers and paraprofessionals who were ill or otherwise were not able to attend;
coordinating program with other tribal programs to secure maximum effectiveness;
preparing refunding proposals (to include budget development);
developing and maintaining a curriculum adapted to the adults and their needs;
developing suitable instructional materials;
participating in tribal and community functions;
accepting and supporting the concept of self-determination for the Choctaw people;
completing and distributing all reports as required at Choctaw: (1) monthly narratives to

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the Bureau of Indian Affairs. to tribal councilmembers and to other program directors; (2) quarterly and annual reports to DHEW/OE, the tribal chairman, and the contracts officer; (3) monthly and annual reports to United Southeastern Tribes, Inc. (to mark the progress and/or problems of the paraprofessionals in their college courses); (4) monthly narratives on the progress of the driver education program to the traffic safety officer, the tribal chairman, and the contracts officer.

PROGRAM SECRETARY

COMPETENCIES

Adult education's secretary can better be described as an office manager. She was integrated into all aspects of the program, thereby relieving the instructional staff of many duties, freeing them for more classroom activities. By employing an individual with both work experience and college training, the program had additional manpower for tutoring the paraprofessionals in their courseworks, assisting the classes in craft projects and for providing on-the-job training. (This program's secretary developed a series of grooming lessons for younger students who had requested them; for a staff in-service training session, she developed and presented a series on money management.)

Basic employment requirements were a high school diploma or its equivalent and work experience with preference given to individuals with college training.

Among the competencies considered appropriate for the secretary were the following:

knowledge of and experience with developing and maintaining an educational records keeping system;

knowledge of and experience with the establishment and maintenance of a filing system;

knowledge of and experience with purchasing procedures;

knowledge of basic principles of accounting;

1974 GRADUATION—More than 300 community members gather in the spring each year to attend graduation ceremonies for adults who received GED diplomas, eighth grade certificates and driver's licenses.

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knowledge of and experience with the operation of office machines;
knowledge of and experience with basic office procedures;
possession of above average typing skills.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The program secretary was responsible for the following:
performing secretarial duties on a variety of technical and administrative matters;
preparing teaching material for use in the classrooms;
inventorying supplies/worktexts/other teaching material and replenishing when necessary;
assisting in developing and maintaining a record keeping system for class attendance;
drafting replies for correspondence;
maintaining a filing and record keeping system for the three programs operating from the adult education office (adult education, United Southeastern Tribes' Teacher Training Project, and driver education);
preparing time and attendance reports.

TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Since many of the potential adult students lacked adequate means of transportation, and, even with the establishment of community classes, still lived ten or twenty miles from the school, a transportation component was necessary if the program were to reach the target population. Unfortunately, neither the DHEW grant award nor the Bureau of Indian Affairs contract terms allowed the purchase of vans for use as buses; however, Bureau of Indian Affairs buses (when not in use by the schools) were available for adult education's use on a cost reimbursable basis of 10¢ for each mile traveled. In some of the communities, tribally owned Headstart and community health program vehicles were used in addition to the Bureau's buses to transport students to and from classes. (The only negative aspect of the plan was the unavailability of buses during the days when they were in use to transport children.)

SON TEACHING FATHER—Junius Lewis, junior teacher (standing), assists his father, Ben Hollis Lewis, with his work in the Bogue Chitto night class. Other students shown are Ellis Thompson (far left) and Mary Robinson (in back).

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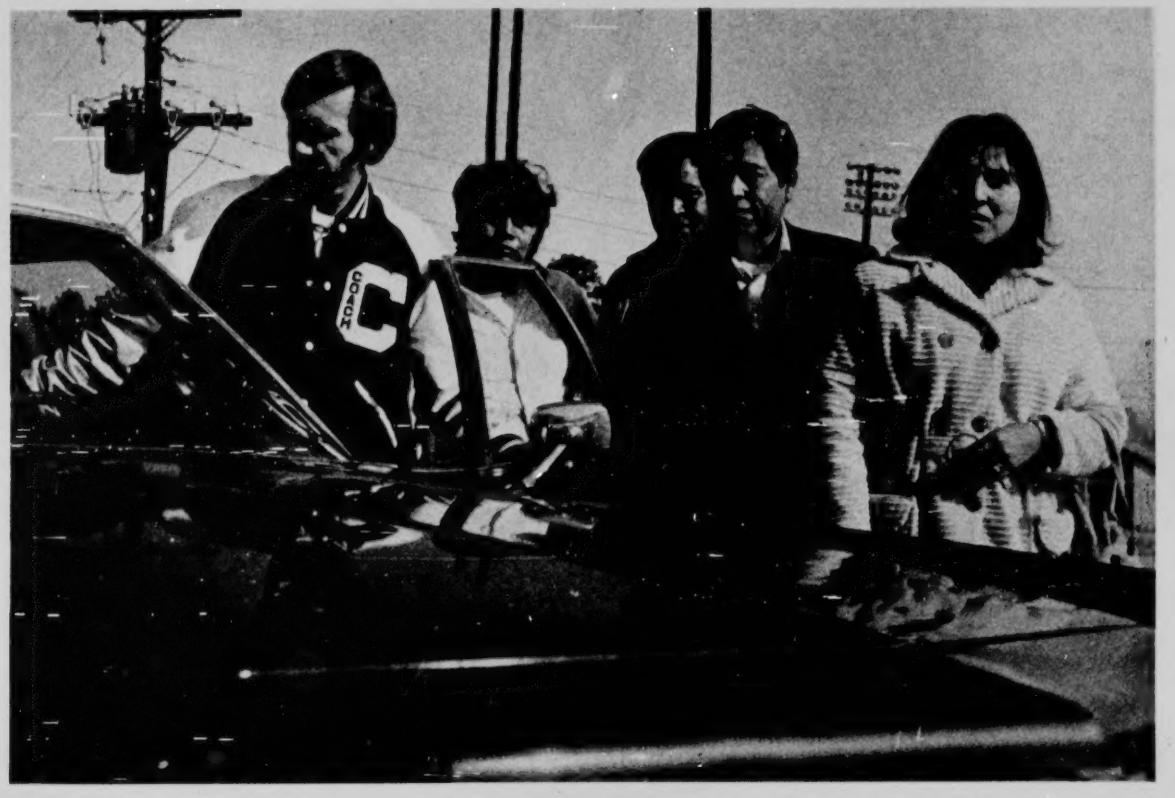
The adults' lack of transportation posed problems in addition to those entailed in attending the classes: there was often no transportation available for the students to travel to the GED testing center, to the site for driver's examinations, to the hospital or clinic, to the tribal office to conduct business, or to job interviews. While some of the above travel may not be considered a legitimate concern of adult education, the staff generally felt a need to provide this kind of transportation for the students. For this reason, a vehicle permanently assigned to adult education would have eliminated the complications which arose when 20 students needed transportation to take the GED or to be examined for eye glasses.

CHILDCARE PLAN

Probably every adult education program was plagued by the problem of providing care for the children of those adults who would like to attend classes but who have no one with whom to leave the children. Choctaw partially solved its childcare needs by the assignment of Operation Mainstream and the Tribal Work Experience Training Program enrollees to adult education as part-time babysitters. In addition, some voluntary babysitters were recruited.

This plan worked well for some communities and not at all in others; its success was a function of the availability of women enrollees stationed in each community. In addition, women who were available to work as babysitters were usually women who wanted to and should attend the adult classes.

Despite the problems encountered in maintaining a viable childcare component, attendance at each class clearly increased when a sitter for children was present. Additionally, the number of husband-wife combinations attending increased when parents knew they could both attend classes and bring their children. The program sought also to avoid having passive babysitters who merely watched the children; rather, efforts were made via suggestions and some training from the supervising teacher to make sure the children were engaged in constructive play or, for older children, assisted with their homework assignments.



DRIVER EDUCATION—Driver education instructor Willis Tullos prepares for a drive with adults Egbert Cotton, Prentiss Lewis, Rufus Wesley, and Mrs. Thomas Waiter.

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INTERPROGRAM/AGENCY COOPERATION

Each tribal program at Choctaw was designed to capitalize on the resources available within other programs; adult education here reflected this philosophy as the program not only received funding from two federal agencies, but also established linkages with other tribal programs, with church groups, and with institutions of higher learning in order to provide a number of services which would not have been possible with only the original grant funds (see chart below).

INTERAGENCY/PROGRAM RESOURCES UTILIZED BY CHOCTAW ADULT EDUCATION

AGENCY	ACTIVITY	CONTRIBUTIONS
(1) DHEW/Office of Education	Basic education classes for the Choctaw communities	Funding for personnel and supplies
(2) Bureau of Indian Affairs [18]	GED preparatory classes for the Choctaw communities	Funding for personnel
	Transportation	Use of BIA buses to transport students to and from classes
	Classroom sites	Use of BIA schools as classrooms for adult education
(3) Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians		
(a) Manpower programs	Childcare	Use of manpower program enrollees to provide childcare in the evenings for adults attending classes
(b) Early Childhood programs	Equipment; day care for children; transportation; health education	Use of audio-visual equipment, provision of day care for children so that mothers could attend day classes; use of buses to transport adults to and from classes; coordination with early childhood's health specialist to provide health education in adult classes
(c) Community Health Services	Transportation	Use of CHS vans to transport students to and from classes
(d) Community Facility Services	Classroom sites	Use of community facility buildings as classrooms for adult education
(e) Traffic Safety	Driver Education teacher/car	Provision of a driver education teacher and automobile for adult students
(f) Continuing Education Center	Career planning; financial aid; transcript evaluation for program's paraprofessionals enrolled in classes	Center director and counselor performed these functions
(g) Choctaw Legal Services	Legal rights education	Use of CLS attorney to provide classroom construction in various areas
(4) Holy Rosary Catholic Church	Classroom site	Use of church hall as a classroom
(5) Mennonite Volunteer Service Unit	Teachers	Use of members of the Mennonite VSU as teachers in the program
(6) Franciscian Sisters of Alleghany, N.Y.	Teachers	Use of members of the order as teachers in the program
(7) Mississippi State University		
(a) Cooperative Extension Service, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture	Nutrition, health, and consumer education	Use of consultants who provided in-service training for the staff and who also provided training in the classes; provision of teaching materials

[18]Bureau of Indian Affairs funds were expended exclusively for personnel salaries for the GED component and insurance; equally as valuable their contributions of classroom sites within the BIA schools, the use of BIA buses for transportation, and the provision of utilities (water, heat, lights) at no cost to the program. Agency Superintendent, Robert Benn, and Educational Programs Administrator, Jimmy Gibson, both Mississippi Choctaws, have consistently supported the program and sought to facilitate its efficient functioning.

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(b) Department of Adult Education	In-service training for staff	Use of consultant for in-service training; program evaluation; provision of teaching materials; provision of graduate coursework for teachers
(8) University of Southern Mississippi/East Central Junior College	College coursework for paraprofessionals	Provision of on-reservation college courses
(9) United Southeastern Tribes, Inc.	College coursework for paraprofessionals	Provision of funds for tuition of paraprofessionals
(10) Indian Health Service[19]	In-service training; classroom instruction	Provision of staff members for screening adult students for eye glasses; for in-service training for staff in health education; for speaking to classes
(11) National Health Services Corps	In-service training; classroom instruction	Provision of staff members for in-service training and for in-class instruction

[19]Choctaw's Indian Health Service Unit Director, Frank Henry, a Mississippi Choctaw, was most cooperative with adult education staff and students in terms of arranging a system of screening adults for eye glasses, securing funds for eye glasses for the students, and supporting health education efforts of the AE staff.

SOLVING MATH PROBLEMS—Joe McMillan (center back) considers a math problem with Debbie Kirk at the Tucker night class. Other students also studying math are (left to right) Jean Tubby, Addie McMillan, Willie Thompson, Mr. McMillan, Ms Kirk, and Kate Billie.

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STAFF TRAINING

For such a long time, it was assumed that the methods used in teaching children could be applied to the teaching of adults; few or no opportunities existed to train individuals as teachers of adults nor were attempts made to recruite such specially educated teachers for adult education.

Even when knowledge gathered from research and experience indicated that adults had certain characteristics that required different teaching techniques than those employed with children, it continued to be difficult and, in some geographic areas, impossible to recruit and hire educators whose training had equipped them to deal with the adult learner. Given these limitations, the development of a good teaching staff for an adult education program became heavily dependent upon the quality of the program's training component.

With this in mind, staff development, for the professionals and paraprofessionals alike, was a priority for Choctaw's adult education project. For both groups (professional and paraprofessional), orientation sessions, individual instruction (from other staff members), program sponsored workshops, non-program sponsored workshops, direct observations, professional conferences, consultants, and college coursework were utilized as a means of learning about the adult. With the exception of college coursework, all training experiences were the same for professionals and paraprofessionals; and the training was viewed as a continuing program of learning about actual classroom problems: any legitimate concern in the classroom was subject-matter for study, but the program was built primarily around the topics listed below:

(1) Physiological, psychological, and sociological characteristics of the adult and their implications for teaching/learning;

(2) Program development for adults (to include individualized learner program planning);

(3) Teaching/learning material for adults;

(4) Recruitment techniques;

(5) Enrollment procedures;

(6) Interview techniques;

(7) Evaluation of student performance levels;

(8) Counseling techniques;

(9) Competency based instruction;

(10) Community relations;

(11) Evaluation of commercial worktexts;

(12) Life skills for adults.

A description of some portions of the training plan used by Choctaw Adult Education can be found on the following pages.

ORIENTATION

Professionals and paraprofessionals, when they were initially employed, were familiarized with the characteristics of the adult learner and the socio-economic characteristics of the client population; with the goals and philosophy of the program and the sponsoring organization (Choctaw Tribal Council); with the teaching material available for use; with the career development options available; and with the community's expectation of the staff. The non-Indian staff member was also apprised of the nature of his job in terms of cultural differences (most of the areas covered in orientation meetings were developed in greater detail in subsequent workshops).

For new staff members, personal instruction, close communication, and support during the first critical weeks were important to give the new teacher confidence in his ability to teach adults. (The new teacher in many cases was like the new adult student; he shared the same insecurities and was uncomfortable in his role.) In addition to the above, an observation period was essential to the new staff member's orientation to the program. He generally spent two weeks visiting all the classes and observing other teachers at work.

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WORKSHOPS AND CONSULTANTS

The workshops were on-site, intensive two or three day sessions conducted either by outside consultants, Choctaw's adult education staff members, or professionals and paraprofessionals from other tribal programs.

When consultants were employed, they were carefully selected on the basis of their actual teaching experience with adults, preferably with Indian people, on their ability to design and execute practicum experiences, and on their ability to involve and interest all staff in the workshop activities. Most significantly, the consultants were evaluated in terms of their long run effects upon staff performance, i.e. how well the teachers implemented recommendation made and how well such recommendations worked to solve problems within the program.

Aside from utilizing consulting services for staff training, the program personnel here felt a need for maintaining contact with a professional adult educator, one who was accessible to them, one who was interested in the program's successful evolution, and one who would objectively evaluate the program in its various developmental stages and could offer viable solutions for problems. Accordingly, after working with several consultants, the program established contact with the adult education department at Mississippi State University, Richard Etheridge, head, and utilized it extensively as an excellent source of technical assistance, not only in staff training but also in other areas of program planning and evaluation.

Briefly, some of the workshops which were most beneficial to the program are described below, along with the date, personnel involved, and topics covered.

CONCENTRATING ON ALGEBRA—Shirley Lewis, GED student at Bogue Chitto, concentrates on work in her algebra book in preparation for the GED examination.

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TECHNIQUES FOR TEACHING BASIC READING SKILLS

Dr. Lora Friedman, consultant — July, 1972
University of Southern Mississippi

1. Recognizing reading readiness in adults
2. Developing word analysis skills
   a. Phonic skills
   b. Structural analysis
   c. Syllabication
   d. Context clues
3. Developing word recognition and vocabulary development activities
4. Developing comprehensive skills
5. Classifying reading material by grade levels
6. Rewriting material to correspond with adult grade levels
7. Writing language experience stories

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TECHNIQUES OF EVALUATION AND CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Dr. Jim Layton, consultant — July, 1972
University of Southern Mississippi

1. Administering diagnostic reading scales
2. Administering general survey tests (to include the Gray-Votaw-Rogers series)
3. Evaluating test results
4. Organizing for instruction
   a. Physical arrangements
   b. Personnel assignments
   c. Material placement
   d. Data collection (about students)

The two workshops above were held during the first weeks of the program, before classes had actually begun, and were planned to give the inexperienced teacher a cursory examination of some teaching techniques which were applicable to adults enrolled in basic education classes; too, the workshops sought to prepare the teachers for the organizational problems they would encounter in the classes. Role-playing was used extensively throughout the sessions to give the teachers a sense of what they would be doing.

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EVALUATING COMMERCIAL MATERIAL IN USE AT CHOCTAW

Choctaw Adult Education staff members — April, 1973

1. Reviewing supplemental reading material available
   a. Positive and negative aspects of same
   b. Suggested uses of same
2. Reviewing commercial language texts available
   a. Positive and negative aspects of same
   b. Suggested uses of same
3. Reviewing commercial social studies tests available
   a. Positive and negative aspects of same
   b. Suggested uses of same

This one-day training session was used to review material that had been found effective in teaching and to suggest usage of such material.

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SELF-DETERMINATION AND ITS IMPLICATION FOR CHOCTAW

Bobby Thompson, Choctaw Tribal Vice-Chairman — May, 1973

1. Defining self-determination
2. Listing tribal council goals
3. Describing the tribal government's organizational plan
4. Describing the benefits of self-determination for members of the tribe

Another one-day session, this meeting was scheduled to familiarize the staff with the organization of the Choctaw tribal government, its function, and its immediate and long range plans; such information was then relayed to each of the Choctaw communities via adult education staff.

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UNDERSTANDING THE ADULT LEARNER AND COMPETENCY BASED INSTRUCTION

Dr. Richard Etheridge, consultant — August, 1973
Mississippi State University

1. Understanding the adult learner
   a. Physiological characteristics of adults
   b. Psychological characteristics of adults
   c. Sociological characteristics of adults
2. Identifying teaching/learning problems in the classes at Choctaw
3. Solving problems via competency based instruction
   a. Individualizing instruction via behavioral objectives and establishing a realistic learning plan for each student
   b. Arranging teaching material to satisfy each student's goals as defined by the behavioral objectives
4. Applying part three to the solution of problems defined in part two
5. Evaluating the workshop: each participant wrote an evaluation of the proceedings

This particular workshop had a telling impact on classroom instruction that continued to be evident; staff members worked individually with the adults, encouraged them (the adults) to set personal goals, developed behavioral objectives and an instructional plan for each student to adhere to, thereby insuring that the learner's efforts were directed toward realizing his goals.

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PREPARATION OF INCOME TAX FORMS

Ed Smith, Choctaw Legal Services Attorney — January, 1974

1. Definition of terms
2. Description of forms
   Short form
   ong form
   iption of allowable deductions

The realization that a number of adults participating in the program had never filed income tax returns although they were usually due returns led to this training meeting which provided the staff with enough information so that they could assist the adults in filing an income tax return.

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RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR NUTRITION EDUCATION

Nancy Ertz, nutrition specialist — February, 1974
Cooperative Extension Service, Mississippi State University

Ms. Ertz described a variety of teaching material available for nutrition lessons for adult education staff members as well as for program personnel from other tribal education programs. Ms. Ertz has subsequently visited a number of adult education classes and taught lessons dealing with a variety of nutritional needs.

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THE TEACHING OF READING TO BEGINNING ADULT STUDENTS
and
THE DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF TEACHER-MADE MATERIALS

Dr. Richard Etheridge, consultant — April and May, 1974
Mississippi State University

These two workshops were problem-centered ones for the staff as they were instructed in teaching methodology for teaching reading to adults and in developing teacher-made reading material for the students. At the second workshop, methods and learning experiences which had emerged earlier were used by the staff as they developed individualized learning packets with lesson plans adapted to fit the specific interests of the Choctaw adults who attended classes. Thirty lessons were completed in the broad areas of credit, health, nutrition, and recreation (a copy of these lessons may be found in volume II of this report).

Upon completions of the workshops, each participant evaluated them via a written assessment with overwhelmingly positive results. The sessions were fruitful ones as both the paraprofessional and professional staff gained confidence and shaped their own ideas into excellent teaching techniques. Furthermore, the level of participation by the staff in the learning situations and their subsequent transference of concepts learned here to the classroom demonstrated the value of such training. (These workshops were prompted by the staff's realization that the reading component of the program here was its weakest and that the commercial materials available on a 0-3.0 grade level were generally inadequate.)

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THE TRUTH-IN-LENDING ACT AND ITS APPLICATION TO CONTRACTS
Ed Smith, Choctaw Legal Services Attorney
Edward John, Choctaw Legal Services — May, 1974

Another brief training lesson, this included a bilingual presentation of truth-in-lending practices and their implications for contracts. When taught in the classes the adults were given contracts to interpret.

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THE FOOD DOLLAR

Beth Henry, Adult Education Teacher ..... August, 1974

1. How to cut costs
   a. Selection of a store
   b. Preparation of a shopping list
   c. Techniques in buying meat, milk, fruits and vegetables, breads and cereals.
2. Unit pricing

This series of lessons was developed by adult education teacher Beth Henry who spent one day instructing the remainder of the staff in presenting the series in all the classes. The unit taught was comprised of four parts and concluded with a visit to grocery stores to compare prices. The response to the lessons was uniformly good, with many adults noting that, for the first time, they not only compared prices of similar items but also compared prices of similar items when purchased at different stores. The lessons were available to other community groups and were given in Headstart Parent Meetings. A complete copy, with instructions, can be found in volume II of this report.

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IN-SERVICE TRAINING: READING, MATHEMATICS, AND DRIVER EDUCATION

Anne Birky, Benford Tubby and Troy Chickaway ..... November, 1974
Adult Education Teachers

1. Utilizing the Laubach Reading Series
   a. Presentation of available Laubach materials
   b. Positive and negative aspects of the series
   c. Role playing: simulation of a teaching/reading session
2. Evaluating commercial mathematics texts
   a. Presentation of available worktexts
   b. Positive and negative aspects of the series
   c. Role playing: simulation of a teaching/reading session
3. Preparing adult students for the written driver's examination
   a. Methods
   b. Materials

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IN-SERVICE TRAINING: MONEY MANAGEMENT

Carol Moore, Adult Education Office Manager ..... December, 1974

1. Consumer Credit
   a. Advantages of credit
   b. Disadvantages of credit
   c. Sources and types of credit
   d. Installment contracts
   e. Determining credit risks
   f. Figuring the cost of credit
   g. Do's and don'ts of credit
   h. Ways to get out of debt
2. Budgeting money
   a. Steps in making a budget
   b. Following a budget
3. Savings
   a. Services offered by banks
   b. Reason for having savings accounts
   c. Summary
4. Insurance
   a. Types of insurance
   b. Amount of insurance needed
   c. Sources of insurance

This series of lessons were developed by Carol Moore, who had a special interest and expertise in money and banking. Ms. Moore spent one day preparing the remainder of the staff to teach the series in the classes. Since economic problems as a result of lack of skills in money management were fairly common within the classes, this group of consumer lessons was enthusiastically received. A complete copy of the lessons, with instructions for teaching, can be found in volume II of this report.

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CONFERENCES

While the program utilized its own workshops to deal with the specific problems of adult education, educational conferences of a more general nature, yet directed toward the particular concerns of Indian education were invaluable to staff development here. A description of these conferences has been included in the report because the questions addressed at each could be directed toward any area of education, and the solutions proposed had almost universal relevance and applicability.

EDUCATION: NEW HORIZONS FOR THE CHOCTAWS

Sponsored by the Choctaw Tribal Council, the Choctaw Board of Education and the Mississippi Committee for the Humanities January 10-11, 1974

Ms. Bea Medicine, Professor of Native American Studies at Dartmouth College and John Rouillard, Chairman of the Native American Studies Department at California State University discussed the issues of contract schools and bilingual education and also discussed the problems unique to Indian education.

All adult education staff members were involved in this conference. They brought parents and children in from each of the seven communities. One staff member, Benford Tubby, served as a panel member and other teachers served as group leaders for the various community groups (see figure 3).

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EDUCATION: NEW HORIZONS FOR THE CHOCTOWS PART 2

Sponsored by the Choctaw Board of Education March 18-19, 1974

Anslem Davis, administrator from Window Rock School in Arizona, discussed curriculum development in Indian Education. Abe Plummer, director of Ramah Navajo High School in New Mexico spoke on culturally relevant Indian education.

Again, adult education staff members provided transportation for community members to come in to the conference.

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READING LESSONS—Sandy Bell, center, holds a reading lesson with Bogue Chitto students Annie Henry (left) and Betty Wallace (right).

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MISSISSIPPI ADULTS EDUCATION ASSOCIATION'S CONFERENCE

Jackson, Mississippi — March 20, 1974

All staff members attended this professional meeting which included lectures, panel discussions and demonstrations relating to adult education.

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SECOND ANNUAL CONFERENCE, CHOCTAW BOARD OF EDUCATION

The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, Alabama — May 3-4, 1974

All staff members attended this two day meeting at the University of Alabama which was called to define current trends in contract Indian schools throughout the country. Speakers and their topics were the following:

"A Rationale for Individualizing Instruction in Schools"
Dr. Paul Streif, Indian Education Resources Center, Albuquerque, N.M.;

"Individualizing Instruction at Rocky Boy School"
Gerald Gray, Superintendent, Rocky Boy Indian Schooi, Rocky Boy, Montana;

"Making Education Programs Relevant to Indian Children"
Ted Rising Sun, Chairman, Busby Contract School Board, Busby, Montana;

"A Curriculum for Safety Education in Indian Schools"
Carlee Lowery, Indian Education Resources Center, Albuquerque, NM.;

"Creating a Culture Relevant Curriculum in an Indian School"
Gerald Gray, Superintendent, Rocky Boy Indian School, Rocky Boy, Montana.

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COUNSELING AND EDUCATION CONFERENCE

United Southeastern Tribes, Inc.
Sarasota, Florida — July 23-25, 1974

In mid-July most of the staff members were in Sarasota for this conference. Sessions there included instruction in counseling techniques for GED students, instruction in developing a curriculum which included native American history and literature, and meetings with GED students from other tribes. (During later sessions, Choctaw's Adult Education staff members were invited to work as counselors with individual students regarding preparation for the GED as well as academic plans following completion of GED studies.)

LITERATURE STUDY—Nell Rogers (left) and Lilly Billie review literature prior to the GED examination.

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COLLEGE COURSEWORK

PARAPROFESSIONALS

As described in the Design Section (paraprofessional component), the prospects for the tribe's accomplishing its self-determination goals were greatly heightened by the availability of comprehensive in-service training programs and university paralleled college coursework for Choctaw paraprofessionals working in various educational programs on the reservation. Developing an in-service training plan for the program posed few problems, but arranging a schedule for college coursework was more difficult: distances for the paraprofessionals from their home to the nearest college or junior college ranged from 30-100 miles; many lacked adequate transportation; and, in most cases, scheduling conflicts arose between the on-campus course meeting times and the students' work assignments.

To solve this problem, an agreement reached between the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, the University of Southern Mississippi, and East Central Junior College brought college courses to the reservation at times amenable to the work schedule of the students. The project cost was fifty-seven dollars per course (three semester hours); each class met once each week with instructors traveling from the University to teach at Choctaw.[20] Five classes per semester were offered and the students usually carried an average load of nine hours.

Prior to the beginning of each semester, contact was made with the course instructors re. the following areas:

(1) Orientation to the special needs which students in the classes might have:

(2) Orientation to tribal goals for educational programs;

(3) Development of a course outline which would be meaningful to the students in terms of their culture and experiences, yet still meet the university's accreditation requirements, i.e. the American literature instructors used an anthology of Native American literature as a basis for study and urged the students to explore the traditions of oral literature found at Choctaw.

The courses scheduled for Choctaw followed liberal arts core curriculum with education courses as electives. As classes were arranged for each program paraprofessional, he worked with the program director and with Choctaw's Continuing Education Center director to devise a flexible degree plan, thereby insuring that all coursework was transferable to a senior college and/or applicable to the student's goals.

Once classes began, the students found that a certain amount of tutoring in some of the more technical and/or abstract courses was beneficial to them. Accordingly, their work schedule was modified to set aside office hours for studying and tutorial sessions (see sample schedule below). Tutoring was provided by the program's director and teachers and, in some cases, by personnel from other tribal programs.

SAMPLE: WORK/STUDY/CLASS SCHEDULE FOR ADULT EDUCATION PARAPROFESSIONAL

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8-12 AM Biology tutoring	8-12 AM Biology II class	8-4:30 PM Pearl River day class	Bogue Chitto day class	8-12 AM American Literature II
12:30-4:30 PM Off	12:30-4:30 PM National Government			12:30-4:30 PM Tutoring if needed; otherwise, off
5:30-8:30 PM Pearl River night class		5:30-8:30 PM Pearl River night class		

[20]This approach is consistent with that used by other tribal educational programs in securing college coursework on the Choctaw Reservation.

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This combination work/study plan was a grueling one for the paraprofessionals, many of whom work four nights per week as teachers. Too, all were married and most had children, placing still more demands on their time as a result of family commitments. Still, despite the personal sacrifices required of them, the paraprofessionals made substantial progress in moving toward their educational goals, to include the following:

(1) One student, having completed her basic core curriculum, transferred to a senior college and is currently enrolled full-time as an on-campus business education major;

(2) Three others, upon completion of the fall '74 semester will have completed requirements for an AA degree;

(3) Together, 11 paraprofessionals earned a total of 384 semester hours (see figure 4 for a breakdown on each person's college hours earned, employment status before joining this program, and educational level);

(4) Grades were average or above average for the program;

(5) Several paraprofessionals transferred from adult education to other tribal programs offering OJT* more relevant to their particular career goals. (One person became a counselor for the Continuing Education Center; another enrolled in a secretarial training program; and another became a counselor of the Manpower Department at Choctaw. All, however, continued to take college courses, following their degree plans.)

(6) Six of the program's paraprofessionals who are now earning college credits also earned their high school equivalency certificates via the adult education program here.

PROFESSIONALS

Professionals on the staff were urged to further develop their expertise in adult education via college coursework, seminars, and relevant professional meetings and conferences. In addition, Mississippi's State Department of Education required six hours of graduate level coursework in adult education to meet teacher certification requirements for adult education. With the exception of those teachers just employed (September, 1974), all teachers completed this coursework by commuting on their own time over 100 miles to Mississippi State University one or two days each week. Adult education teaching credentials held by the staff now include the director's M. Ed. in adult education, one teacher's M. Ed. in adult education, and a third teacher's beginning a graduate program in adult education. The two newest staff members will begin graduate level coursework in adult education in 1975.

This level of professional competence contributed to the program's gains as the teachers did not require a great deal of OJT, but were instead able to immediately apply their skills to organizing and teaching in the classes, to developing learning experiences, and to providing training for the paraprofessionals.

*On the Job Training

0044

DEMONSTRATION FUNCTIONS

The innovative "product" of this program was not a tangible, concrete product, or a manual, or specific instructional materials[21] but could be found rather in (1) the flexibility of its administrative and instructional approach; (2) the capacity of this approach to allow for the provision of individualized, non-mechanical learning experiences; (3) the portability and culturally neutral nature of the program which allowed it to move into communities where people gathered easily; (4) its suitability to a population desiring to develop professionals via the use of indigeneous paraprofessionals who follow a career ladder that provides college coursework and a degree plan for them; and (5) the minimal capital purchase requirements.

No attempt will be made to suggest that this particular program found and demonstrated solutions to all the problems which often accompany adult education programs; rather, the Choctaw project demonstrated that there are no gimmicks always guaranteed to work, no right answers. This section of the report will detail instead approaches and attitudes which worked well at Choctaw and which, with some adaptation, could be useful for other groups.

RECRUITMENT

Before recruitment began in a community, the staff agreed on several points of policy. These premises, adopted at the beginning of the program and listed below, influenced recruitment, precedures.

Choctaw's project was not just a remedial/vocational program aimed primarily toward manpower development. It sought rather to deal with the whole person, not simply with his lack of occupational or communication skills, but with as many of his human needs as possible. (Admittedly, this was an ambitious objective, but one which could be met by coordinating adult education's functions with those of other service agencies.)

The diagnosed needs (as defined by proposal objectives) of the target population were not necessarily those wants expressed by the potential adult students. He was best appealed to by offers of an opportunity to first satisfy his immediate needs, so that he would thereby perceive adult education as relevant to his life situation.

The program was geared to reach the entire family, not just one or two parents, but was instead described as an opportunity for families to study together, with baby sitters for younger children and homework assistance for older children. Older family members were actively sought as participants; their knowledge of community traditions and interpersonal relationships within each community made them valuable as liasion people with the communities and as resource people for the teachers.[22]

Recruitment was largely dependent upon home visits by the bilingual paraprofessionals. Working in their home communities, they visited each family, carefully explaining what the program's purpose was, how transportation and child care were arranged and who the teachers were. A survey form (see volume II for a copy) was used to record each visit. Some initial visits yielded no response, but if an individual responded positively to the visitor's overtures, he (the visitor) gathered enough information about the adult in order to allow the teacher to make realistic plans for class meetings.

Home visits by the paraprofessionals, because they understood the attitudes, values, fears, and aspirations of the population, continued to be a most effective means of recruitment. The recruiting process was broadened to include a column in the *Choctaw Community News*, a newspaper published regularly by the tribal government (see figures 5, 6 and 7); a brochure mailed to all tribal members and distributed at local festivals (see figure 8); contact with program directors, and participation by staff members at community functions, i.e. adult education teachers attend community club meetings and discuss the program there.

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[21]Instructional materials were, however, devised to meet the specific needs evidenced here that were not dealt with in the available commercial material. Copies of some of this material can be found in volume II of this report.

[22]On more than one occasion, an elder in the community would attend class first; if he were satisfied with what he found, he returned to the class with his son or daughter, and they in turn brought their children to the classes.

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Tribal council members and members of the class were also successful recruiters for the classes by working within their own communities in support of the classes, encouraging relatives and friends to participate in the classes (for a breakdown on recruitment information, see tables 3 and 4).

The means used to interest adults in enrolling was an appeal that basically said, "Tell us what you want to know; if we can't help you, we'll refer you to a program or agency which can give you the training you want." Very often, GED students who enrolled to pursue GED study, also wanted to learn typing as well. These students were then enrolled in typing classes at the local high school (through a cooperative arrangement with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Choctaw Agency) and continued to study for the GED equivalency in the adult classes.

RETENTION

The problem of student withdrawal, which exists as a nagging problem for most adult education programs, especially for basic education programs whose participants cannot realistically look forward to the immediate gains that can be expected for GED participants, was not a serious one for Choctaw's program; since its inception, the program, which was funded for four centers and 100 adult students, supported 10 classes with enrollment figures ranging from 240 to 330 and attendance averages ranging from 160 to 230. And, the most recent attendance rates indicated that the program was operating at its maximum capacity, based on the staff available.

Attempts to analyze the factors that generated such a positive response from the target population were not completely conclusive nor were all the factors that contributed to the attendance figures examined, but some observations were made vis á vis attendance/retention for the program. These follow:

(1) Clearly a state of readiness existed among the population brought about in part by the tribal government's extensive campaign to inform the potential students of the benefits of education in general and by an apparent interest in learning for its own sake.

BOGUE CHITTO NIGHT CLASS—Beth Henry, center, instructs Hazel Willis at the Bogue Chitto night class.

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(2) Unwavering support of the program by the tribal chairman, the tribal council members and tribal program directors lent credibility to the program among community people and served to encourage widespread participation.

(3) An operating principle of accountability to the community kept communication lines open and prevented misunderstandings and legitimate complaints about the program from escalating and driving students from the classes. Communities were told, "This is your program. Use it for whatever purposes you define as worthwhile."[23]

(4) Retention rates were facilitated by satisfying the student's immediate goals, i.e. if an adult wanted his driver's license first, then efforts were made to achieve that objective before any other. At the same time that the student was involved in driver education, he was shown a variety of books and asked to examine them for possible interest. Encouraged by his mastery of the skills he came originally to learn and intrigued by the activities of the other students, the adult usually chose to remain in the class and set other learning goals for himself.

(5) Adult education staffers regularly met with community people to discuss the program's status within the community; the staff sought to work with the same people to ascertain community problems and direct the program toward solving them.

Just as it was utilized in recruiting students, home visitation was an essential factor in the maintenance of consistent attendance rates. First visits were made by the Choctaw staff member. Following two or three subsequent visits, the non-Indian staff member accompanied the home visitor to a home, with this visit arrangement of the two together continuing until the non-Indian teacher had achieved adequate rapport and familiarity with the community so that she could visit alone, thereby increasing the man-hours available for home visits. Within a few months, all the program staff visited comfortably, whether alone or in teams in all the communities. These visits tended to be social rather than official in nature with visitors stopping to have a meal with the adults, inquiring after members of a family who were ill, or chatting informally for a while. Often the student used the home visit for additional instructional time. He and the teacher had longer periods of uninterrupted learning time and many times the student was more willing to ask questions in the privacy of his home, away from the presence of other adults.

Trust relationships established among the teachers and students positively affected retention rates; once the adult was in the class, he continued to receive a great deal of personal attention from his teachers. (To the degree that when teachers failed to demonstrate interest in and warmth for individual students, attendance figures declined.)

The student-teacher ratio within the classes also had a telling effect on retention. When the program first began, substantial attendance declines were noted in classes whose student-teacher rate exceeded 10-1. In classes with higher numbers of adults studying on 0-3 educational grade levels, the acceptable (to the students) ratio fell to 7-1. Generally, higher student-teacher ratios did not allow the students to progress as rapidly as they wished. As a result, the program subscribed to the idea that it was desirable to have lower attendance figures and provide more quality education for those students currently enrolled, with students moving through the system more quickly than would be possible if larger numbers of students came. As students saw fellow class members successfully complete various levels in the classes fairly rapidly, then they were more inclined to remain rather than withdraw from classes.

Motivation seemed to be educational, social and job oriented. Most of the adults coming to and remaining in classes were interested primarily in reading and working with numbers, and attempts to divert their attention were met with resistance. The classes were very serious, aside from the breaks which were established according to student preference. The breaks were animated, social periods when coffee (provided by the program) and refreshments (provided by the students) were served; breaks also allowed the students and teachers to interact and served to promote a sense of unity within the class that was important to the class's stability. While these

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[23]The program had few dropouts (students who left and did not return to class). Rather, the adults tended to attend classes for a period of time, discontinued attendance for several weeks, and then returned to classes. Each class also had a core group of students who enrolled when the program began and continued to attend.

social experiences were an integral part of each (in the fall and winter, the class represented the only organized activity, other than those of the churches, which existed for older adults here), it was important that the classes not seem completely social.

Barriers (non-personal) which were observed to prevent the student from staying in school were work and family commitments, community obligations, differences in values, and a need to continue certain activities which conflicted with class schedules. Unfortunately, some of the community members who were most supportive of the program were so overloaded with community responsibilities that they, despite their interest, were not able to attend classes on a regular basis (see table 5 for withdrawal data).

The most critical period for retaining students in the program was summer. This is a rural area and during the summer months with long daylight hours, many people worked in gardens until seven or eight p.m. Also, in the summer, tribal recreational activities and festivals competed with the classes for the students' attention. An extensive recreational program of softball and baseball traditionally existed in the summer for all ages; there were lighted softball fields in each of the communities with one or two games scheduled each night in the week. Church functions increased, too, with revivals, vacation Bible schools, day camps, and singing constantly in progress. By late June, community clubs had begun preparations which occupied large time segments for the annual Choctaw Indian Fair which was held in late July each summer. All these activities contributed to each communities sense of itself and were not likely to be displaced in the summers by adult education classes. In fact, most of the enrolled adults asked that classes be suspended for 30-60 days during the summer so that other activities could be attended (for an indication of attendance fluctuations, see table 6).

TEACHING/LEARNING STRATEGIES

Shaping a life-centered program which dealt with the real problems of the Choctaw people and emphasized coping skills in its classes was not achieved by adhering to a single method or technique to the exclusion of other. Rather, a variety of teaching learning strategies were examined and used to produce a desirable climate for learning.

MONEY MANAGEMENT—Carol Moore, money management workshop coordinator, reviews an income tax form with adult education junior teachers Donna Farmer and Troy Chickaway.

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INITIAL CONTACT

The first crucial step in establishing a positive climate for learning occurred when the adult had his initial contact with the teachers. The student was warmly and immediately greeted by the staff, never allowed to stand and wait uncomfortably and hesitantly for someone to notice his presence. Once he was welcomed to the class, some questions were asked at this time via an informal interview conducted either by the non-Indian teacher or the Choctaw speaking paraprofessional, depending upon the student's knowledge of English[24] (no matter who the interviewer was, it was essential for all staff members to welcome a new student to their class). Information to be gathered included the following:[25] educational background, previous work experiences, student's plans or goals, student's interests, student's birthdate, home and work addresses, and family data.

The interviewer explained fully and clearly what the student could expect from attending the class and studying and how the class was structured. At this point, too, the interviewer diagnosed the student's level through formal and/or informal means, relieving any apprehension the adult might feel by explaining that testing (1) did not mean a pass or fail situation, (2) did not give him a grade, and (3) would be used to determine areas that the student needed and did not need to study, thereby speeding up his progress by allowing him to concentrate on his weaknesses.[26]

After pre-testing was completed, the teacher showed the student every step in checking his test, showing him what was missing and explaining how he could study to improve his skills in that area. (Usually, the student responded most positively if he completed one section of the test at a time and had the teacher check it before proceeding to another section.) These results were analyzed by looking for the greatest number of items or questions incorrectly answered by areas. Following this analysis each individual was free to determine his own curriculum, with the assistance of extensive personal counseling.[27]

INDIVIDUALIZED INSTRUCTION

Although a variety of teaching methods existed with the program, the instructional approach most frequently utilized was that which treated the student as an individual rather than as a member of a group. (The students, as mentioned previously were grouped, but only for purposes of classroom management; each person within the group was treated individually.) In the beginning, all of the teaching staff, none of whom had previously worked exclusively with adults, were forced literally by trial and error to discover effective and acceptable methods for dealing with each individual.

The teachers also found that the individuals attending the classes could be identified as members of several possible groups (described below), each with its own idea about how teaching should occur; they found that with few exceptions, individual attention was necessary. (These group characteristics, the staff felt, could be applied to any population and could be used to assist adult education teachers in planning for individualized learning experiences.)

Group A: Economically and personally secure, these adults believed in education; they were active in community affairs. Unlike the remaining groups, they liked structured and traditional teaching situations. They could be and in fact preferred to be taught together as a group.

Group B: Hurt by lack of education, and perhaps unemployed, this group of adults was fairly easy to reach, and, once in the program, showed rapid gains. A variety of teaching methods were necessary to retain them.

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[24]Extreme care and sensitivity were exercised at this point so that the adult didn't feel his life was being pried into or that he might be subject to ridicule. This enrollment interview was conducted out of the other students' hearing range, with the interviewer instructed to never press for answers.

[25]Forms can be found in volume II of the report.

[26]Every adult was not tested during his initial class meeting; generally, if the adult indicated that he'd had from 0-6 years formal schooling, he was not tested with a general achievement test, but was informally evaluated via a reading list and a series of math problems. Those individuals who had completed 7-11+ years' school were tested on a general achievement test.

[27]The classes structured into small groups depending upon the students' reading level, as indicated by pretesting, and the number of teachers available. Three general levels found in each class were beginning, usually 0 level; intermediate level, some reading skills 2-6; and GED level, reading skills 6-11+. These categories were further broken down into additional groups when more teachers were available.

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Group C: Although far from GED level, these adults still believed they could get a return from education. They succeeded with individualized instruction and a significant amount of attention.

Group D: Finally, the staff was forced to recognize the existence of a fourth group of individuals; those adults whose socio-economic conditions were such that they might never be reached by such a program, and if they did ever attend classes, required a very specialized curriculum and extreme sensitivity on the part of the teachers and the other adults in the classes.

Most of the adults who enrolled in the classes for basic education fell in groups B or C where individualized instruction was a necessity if success was to be found; individualized instruction here included the individual's setting his own goals to work toward and the teacher's willingness to plan learning experiences which aided the student in achieving these ends. This approach also demanded a wide variety of consumable teaching material, a low student-teacher ratio, and teachers who were able to operate in a low-keyed, personal manner, recognizing that nothing could be gained by affecting an autocratic and uncompromising stature.

There have been, to be sure, disadvantages that the staff observed in using individualized instruction to the extent that a much larger staff was required; the student sometimes developed a dependency relationship; teachers were unwilling and/or unable to modify their teaching to accommodate the individual learner; the adult very often had difficulty functioning in a non-directive teaching/learning situation, one in which he as the individual learner was forced to choose his learning goals. Some adults had difficulty perceiving that individualized instruction was equivalent to "real school". They occasionally prefered a lecture situation.[28]

[28]Education was valued here and, generally, the concept of school that the adults subscribed to was that of the schools that they saw their children attending or that they had once attended. Magazines, catalogs and similar publications traditionally used for teaching in adult education programs were not thought of as "real books" and as such were rejected. Films, too, were perceived as entertainment, as were some consumer lessons (younger adults, however, indicated via a survey that they preferred more audio-visual aids in the classes; of 204 people questioned, 124 wanted more audio-visuals in the classes).

GRADUATION DANCERS—The Bogue Chitto dancers annually perform for the graduates and their guests at adult education graduation.

0050

Despite the possible, perhaps likely, negative results that could be encountered in implementing individualized instruction, the positive attributes of such instruction as listed below warranted its use:

(1) Diagnosis of learning needs and prescription for the same were likely to be far more accurate if the teacher had frequent one to one encounters with the adult.

(2) Individualized instruction greatly eased fears among the students for they knew they would not be called upon to respond specifically to questions in the presence of others.

(3) Progress for the student occurred more rapidly, usually in direct proportion to the amount of uninterrupted teacher time spent with him.

(4) The personal relationship which had such positive effects on retention rates were more likely to evolve if individualized instruction were used in the classes.

(5) Similarly, counseling was facilitated by the relationships established during instructional time between student and teacher.

(6) The cost of individualized instruction was not prohibitive, especially when it was achieved by differentiated staffing and learning experiences developed by the teacher and student. Additional personnel costs were really minimal when one considered that (a) the length of instructional time required to achieve goals was lessened by individualized instruction, (b) the increased number of people who moved successfully through the program and emerged more quickly with real skills increased with individualized instruction, (c) the dollar cost of purchasing and maintaining expensive teaching machinery and/or commercially prepared modules for individualized instruction—while lower than that of employing additional teaching personnel—was not justifiable particularly when one considered the positive human gains that could come from a teacher-student relationship and never from a machine or packet of material into which the student had little or no input.

The conclusion drawn at Choctaw was that individualized instruction succeeded here where other approaches employed in the past failed; it was implemented with ease; it required, however, competent and confident staff members who were not afraid to plan with and teach each adult individually (see table 7 for student preferences of instructional methods).

GROUPING

There were situations when grouping was appropriate for teaching, certainly, with more than one teacher working within a class, the students had to be "grouped" for staff assignments. Determining group makeup, however, was a sensitive, difficult task. After attempting grouping by age and sex (women preferred to sit with women, men with men, and younger people—18-23—with similarly aged people), the staff at Choctaw grouped the classes by performance level as determined by testing and observations. To cope with initial reactions of displeasure that arose when friends were separated or women and men were asked to sit at the same table, the adults were asked to study with one teacher for awhile, then return to their original seats to work independently. Gradually, the students chose to remain in the grouped position throughout the day, not moving back and forth. (New students, however, were always allowed to sit where they chose until they were comfortable in the class.)

There were occasions when group learning experiences were preferable to individualized instruction; these experiences were more possible among members of 0 level groups and GED groups (there was a greater performance level disparity among members of other groups than among members of these two). In fact, the GED groups at Choctaw were composed usually of adults who preferred more traditional teaching methods, including homework and tests. (Interestingly, of 219 adults surveyed, 155 preferred more homework.) The 0 level adults, on the other hand, were introduced to their first learning experiences together, and were mutually supportive of each other (as they were all aware that each was a beginning student). Some positive group teaching situations are listed below:

(1) Reading lessons, when new words were first introduced;

(2) Handwriting exercises, so that all students could observe the teacher together;

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(3) GED level, new concepts were introduced, i.e. describing the atom and its structure or the meaning of style and clarity as related to communication skills;

(4) Spelling and vocabulary lessons;

(5) Some social studies reading selections.

Within the group structure, teaching methods varied from lectures to discussions. At first, most group instruction was accomplished via lecture. Not many adults were trained to participate in discussion; one used discussion only as students grew in their ability to articulate their thoughts and achieved a more secure self-concept (one which allowed the adult to be wrong or to be questioned without feeling threatened); most group learning in the classes at Choctaw was characterized by the teacher's explaining a concept to the members of the group, then soliciting and answering questions about the subject matter. This was followed by individualized instruction in the area, i.e. specific items were explained to each adult as requested. Then, the student asked more and more detailed questions and discussed with his teacher what had just been gone over. Only rarely did he ask questions or make comments to a group as a whole. By first speaking to the group as a whole, then switching to an individual procedure, the teachers provided continuous feedback to the students and assisted them in making immediate application of what they had learned. There were, of course, exceptions to the above description: group structure, compatibility of group members and teacher, and even the community in which the class was held, all affected the scope of group interaction which occurred in a given class.

FIELD EXPERIENCES

A popular strategy for learning among the students was field experiences (trips to places that had piqued their interest). Some of the trips grew out of the adults' studies, such as government or native American history. Other visits were the result of the adults' articulated wish to visit a place never visited before.

One field trip, for example, grew out of lessons on the branches of government and the adult's desire to visit the state capitol. The class traveled to Jackson, Mississippi, on BIA buses to the state capitol building where they were greeted by the state's governor (television coverage of this trip was provided and the class members appeared on the evening news throughout the state; pictures and news articles appeared in the state newspapers, too). Following the students' meeting with the governor, the representative from Choctaw's district led the group on a tour of the capitol and accompanied them to a committee hearing where the adults met the legislators present.

Another trip took the students to Nanih Waiya, the legendary burial mound for the Choctaw people which figured prominently in the Choctaw Creation story. (Many of the adults here had previously been to Nanih Waiya, but some of those living in more distant communities had not been there.)

Following the Nanih Waiya trip, the adults were interested in visting other traditional village sites so trips were taken to Moundville State Park in Alabama, the site of numerous mounds and the remains of villages constructed by members of the much earlier mound building cultures.

Additional trips were taken to shopping malls, airports, zoos, reservoirs, and to a quick service restaurant (such as McDonald's).

These trips were planned for Saturdays so that they could be family events. Often everyone packed a picnic lunch and ate in a park.

CURRICULUM AND MATERIALS

The program's curriculum was influenced by certain philosophical considerations about education's role in the evolution of a confident, competent population; education was generally used as a means of molding minority people into the likeness of the majority culture as members of the majority culture perceived education as a means of transmitting culture, a means of constructing a way of life, improving the lot of individuals and improving self. Schools were planned to help

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the individual have a good self-concept, to feel good about himself as a person, to learn the skills of learning. Though in practice, the broad socialization function of schools too often subordinated the needs and interests of individual students to the monolith of the average, normal, Anglo, middle-class student stereotype. This mechanism wasn't good, necessarily, for Indian people who didn't find their language, their history, or their culture when they entered the classroom. This void worked in a negative sense, chipping away at the student's self image. The result was cultural conflict and a reluctance to become involved in activities relating to schools.

To avoid this rejection, it became necessary to change the approach to education so that the individual saw himself positively, that he saw pictures of members of his ethnic group, that he read stories about them, that he talked about the traditions of his people without fear of ridicule for holding to them, and, in fact, received positive feedback for his following his traditions.

The adult in classes here, who had probably always been urged to "speak English", if he "wanted to be successful", had, through his schooling, to see that language was merely a communication tool; he had to feel that the Choctaw language was good, that it was proper for him to use it, but that by his learning to use the English language, he was broadening his communication tools.

An educational program that reinforced a positive self-concept was best achieved by integrating the culture of the person being taught into the subject matter. This was done at Choctaw via the input of the paraprofessionals who communicated community and individual traditions into the program plan and who, in their teaching, constantly provided meaningful examples to the student, i.e. adults beginning in mathematics learned the English words for numbers by comparing those terms with the Choctaw words for numerals; vocabulary words were taught by drawing a picture on the chalkboard, saying the corresponding Choctaw word, and writing its equivalent in English. Other curriculum components were also added upon the request of students, when funding and personnel permitted.

TUCKER CLASS—Mary Agnes Smith, standing, teaches a reading group at Tucker.

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Care was taken, too, to insure that each level of the curriculum allowed the adult to learn and use the problem solving approach, thereby helping him overcome the negative aspects of his life which caused him to be labeled disadvantaged.

In its early stages, the curriculum was to be composed of these areas: literacy education, consumer education, and GED preparatory (the latter funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs). The first and latter of these were immediately accepted by the adults who, at the same time, generally rejected any attempts to interest them in consumer/health or legal education. The staff was dismayed as it (1) knew of numerous socio-economic ills which could be corrected by the adults' increased awareness of consumer oriented skills, (2) had intended to teach reading and mathematics via reading and problems that occurred during consumer education lessons, and (3) had prepared a variety of learning experiences oriented to increasing consumer knowledge. The adults, however, oblivious to the staff's chagrin were simply studying those areas that they valued; although planners and teachers had identified needs of the target population, the adults had yet to perceive these same needs. What they did feel was a real desire to learn to read, to add, to subtract. They were not especially interested in listening to someone talk to them, either in English or Choctaw, about the basic four food groups, about the importance of reading or having someone read contracts to them before signing, or about the disadvantages of overextending oneself through credit.

Two years later, however, the curriculum did include consumer oriented segments to which the adults responded with a great deal of interest. The change in attitude was attributed to several factors: (1) most significantly, the adults felt a real need for the lessons, i.e. the tremendous rise in food prices and its effect upon families' budgets resulted in a series on comparative shopping, (2) only areas in which students displayed a genuine interest were studied, and (3) the lessons were studied initially by only those who articulated the interest and not by the entire class. For example, students' conversation in one group about the problems of maintaining a used car and/or the prohibitive costs of buying new cars prompted a unit on the advantages of purchasing a good used car. Usually, as the other students in the class observed what another group was studying, the former group would ask for the same lesson.

REDWATER STUDENT—(from left) Cecelia John and Rena John work with Shirley Willis on a math problem.

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Aside from overlooking the realization that adults frequently had unfelt needs which they obviously were not interested in satisfying until they (the adults) defined them (needs) as felt, another important factor was ignored when the consumer section of the curriculum was originally planned: to agree to study budgeting, or good nutritional planning, or methods of solving credit problems meant to many adults that they were unable to cope with these very personal areas of their lives, that they, in essence, had failed. It was, it seemed, much easier for the adult to study reading with his peers who also were non-readers. It was quite another situation for him to examine his own income and expenditures and to see what he had over-obligated himself. Too, he was a non-reader through no fault of his own, and, while his economic problems were often no fault of his own either, he often saw them as a result of his own mismanagement.

For consumer education to become viable in the program here and perhaps in programs anywhere, the lessons had to grow out of student inquiry. The procedure of developing a unit was similar to this: an informal conversation among the teacher and students over food prices and the shrinking food dollar led to the preparation of a series of lessons on food shopping for this group of students in one class. (Following this, the teacher who prepared the series added them to the curriculum and demonstrated/presented the lessons in a workshop to the entire adult education staff.) These lessons culminated in comparative food shopping trips at local grocery stores; during one such visit, adults checking prices at the dairy section, raised questions about yogurt and cottage cheese as diet foods. The discussion continued when the adults returned to the class and resulted in a series of lessons on dieting. Other students asked about some foods which they hadn't tasted before. The teachers then put together a nutritional series and held a taste party for the adults so that they could taste new foods and also categorize them into the various food groups. (In a recent survey 62 percent of the students questioned indicated that they would like more consumer-oriented lessons.)

Arts and crafts, very li[illegible]e consumer topics, was introduced into the curriculum on the basis of student requests; women in two communities, Standing Pine and Tucker, learned crocheting from staff members proficient in that craft; after instruction, one student was able to produce and sell a number of crocheted shawls. Classes in another community concentrated on Choctaw beadwork; an instructor from the community was invited to attend classes and teach beadwork one evening per month. Conehatta's class developed quilting classes: one hour each week was spent by the students to piece quilt squares. Later they quilted the quilt and raffled it off in order to raise money for a class trip. Plans were made to begin sewing groups and crafts lessons for men (wood carving, stickball stick making).

Cultural elements, aside from crafts, were implemented into the curriculum via the academic subjects: Indian history, for example, was integrated into reading and social studies classes through a variety of books on various levels (some of the commercial books were well-received and are described in greater detail in the materials section).

A modified variety of driver education had been in the curriculum since the program began. For the first two years, driver education was limited to helping students prepare for the written or, in the case of nonreaders, the oral examination for a driver's license. Despite the limitations of not having a driver's education automobile, 32 adults obtained a driver's license. Finally in October, 1974, using Department of Transportation funds, via the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the program was able to offer a comprehensive driver education program with a certified driver education instructor and driver education car. The teacher worked on a roving basis, moving from community to community. He had access to and regularly used the driver simulators located in the BIA high school. (Currently there are 60 adults enrolled in these classes.)

The curriculum also provided for study of the Choctaw tribal government, its structure and functions. Although a syllabus was not developed for this area, a variety of lessons on issues facing the tribal government were presented by both adult education staffers and tribal government representatives (who sometimes happened to be students in the classes). One consideration the program faced in dealing with this curriculum component was that of different political factions within each community. In order to avoid alienating members of one or more groups, staff members were admonished to be carefully objective in their presentations, to discuss only the facts, and to avoid any attempts to influence student opinion.

0055

A curriculum outline, although not detailed, was prepared and follows; it includes comments about certain components:

ABREVIATED CURRICULUM OUTLINE

I. Elementary level

A. Beginning reading and handwriting (Note: This section, rather than delineating the familiar tasks involved in teaching reading, will consider, instead comments made by Choctaw's reading specialist, Anne Birky, concerning particular problems in teaching reading here and possible solutions to same.)

Teaching reading to the adult classes involved accurate diagnostic procedures, satisfactory teaching materials, and competent, sensitive teachers. Diagnosis was achieved fairly quickly by giving the student a standardized reading test (only if it could be determined that he would not be frightened and/or embarrassed) or by having the student page through a reading book, asking him to read selections to determine his vocabulary level, comprehension level and oral reading skills level.

Finding satisfactory teaching materials which could be utilized by untrained teachers working in a bilingual situation was a most difficult task; after much experimentation, the Laubach New Streamlined English Series, 0-5, was found to work best here. This particular series, which not without deficiencies, did teach sight reading as well as phonetic reading. (English seemed to be such a difficult language with so many exceptions to the phonics rules that some sight memorization was essential. Although older students had difficulty hearing and replicating many of the phonetic sounds, some phonics instruction was included so that the students could sound out new, unfamiliar words that were similar to those that they had learned in class.) In addition to commercial materials, the teachers made their own materials for the students: nouns were taught using flash cards with pictures on them; when the card was held up, the teacher said the word in Choctaw and then in English. Sentence structure was taught using work cards arranged in the order of sentences. The teachers often made reading and writing worksheets to teach the alphabet, handwriting skills or spelling skills. Chart stories also proved to be good teaching vehicles as the students dictated a story of their experiences and saw the teacher record these.

A persistent question that arose among the teaching staff was that of when to teach the alphabet. Various commercial reading series attacked the problem at different stages in the student's progress. The teachers here found that the student's reading progress was facilitated by his knowing the alphabet before attempts were made to teach words. They found, too, that adults learned nouns more quickly and could begin to read complete sentences with greater ease and more personal satisfaction when they know only a few verbs and articles but many nouns.

In adult classes that last for an entire day or in the evening classes, reading was held at the beginning of the session. The students came to the class with expectations and enthusiasms that sometimes waned as the class time passed. Too, the adult was generally more alert, and more able to assimilate new concepts easily early in the class time.

The teachers of reading had to be very sensitive to all the needs of the students, realizing that the adults felt inadequate and unable to learn. They had a real need for encouragement from the teacher and their fellow clasmates. For this reason, the teachers remained with the students constantly, immediately alert to the student's first problem, providing remedial activities and support quickly.

Teachers of reading here found also that the student's ability to learn to read did not differ with different ages; what was affected by aging, however, was the ability to learn quickly. Older students, especially those who were non-English speaking, made gains at a slower pace than did those younger students. The older students required much more repetition; infact, these students were taught for overlearning.

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Finally, all the staff learned that reading was not a skill which would be learned quickly by any of the students despite their age and/or previous skills with English. It was, then, important that the teachers guide the students toward realistic reading goals. Teaching reading required a great deal of innovation on the part of the teachers, and it required further that the teaching procedures be related to the Choctaw language as often as possible.

B. Beginning arithmetic

1. Writing numbers and counting 1-10
2. Adding: using 0-9
3. Subtracting: using 0-9
4. Writing numbers and counting to 19
5. Writing numbers and counting to 100
6. Adding: using 10-19; using 10-99
7. Subtracting: using 10-10; using 10-99
8. Writing larger numbers
9. Adding: using 100-999
10. Subtracting: using 100-999
11. Multiplication using 0-5 as factors
12. Division: using 0-5 as divisors
13. Multiplication: using 0-9 as factors
14. Division: using 1-9 as factors

II. Intermediate level (These are not detailed outlines)

A. English grammar

1. Nouns
2. Pronouns

INDIVIDUALIZED INSTRUCTION—Most instruction is done on an individualized basis as seen here in the Standing Pine night class. Lena Denson, standing left, and Shirley Willis ,right, teach Roger Gibson, Joseph Farve, Harry Polk, and Carmen Jefferson.

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3. Verbs
4. Adjectives
5. Prepositions
6. Contractions
7. Negatives
8. Usage
9. Punctuation
10. The sentence
11. Vocabulary and dictionary skills
12. Spelling

B. Reading

1. Reading passages

a. Words in context
b. Passage outline
c. Main ideas

2. Reading in social studies (Note: Native American literary writings integrated into the curriculum)
3. Reading in natural sciences
4. Reading in literature (Note: Native American literary writings integrated into the curriculum)

C. Arithmetic

1. Value of a number
2. Addition
3. Subtraction
4. Multiplication
5. Division
6. Fractions
7. Decimals
8. Measures

III. GED Preparatory

A. English grammar (Note: This segment allowed the student writing experiences as well as practice in the recognition of grammatically correct structures within reading selections.)

1. Spelling
2. Vocabulary skills
3. Parts of speech
4. Parts of a sentence
5. Common errors
6. Style and clarity
7. Punctuation
8. Pronunciation markings

B. Mathematics

1. Arithmetic

a. Fractions
b. Decimal fractions
c. Percentage
d. Graphs
e. Properties of numbers
f. Signed numbers

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2. Algebra

   a. Equations
   b. Evaluations of expressions and formulas
   c. Monomials
   d. Polynomials
   e. Factoring
   f. Verbal problems
   g. Quadratic equations
   h. Simultaneous equations

3. Geometry

   a. Angles
   b. Triangles
   c. Plane and solid figures
   d. Rectangular coordinates

4. Modern Mathematics

   a. Set theory
   b. Inequalities
   c. Relations and functions
   d. Properties

4. Furniture and appliance buying

   a. Bedding
   b. Upholstered furniture
   c. Floor covering
   d. Wood furniture

ASSISTING AT RECEPTION—These adult education students served refreshments to those attending adult education graduation and the reception following. From left are Naomi Bell, Janie Bell, Lucy Morris, Delores Ben, Shirley Lewis, Encie Dixon and Kate Willis.

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C. Literature (Native American literary writings continued to be integrated into the curriculum.)

1. Reading comprehension and vocabulary skills
2. Prose
   a. Fiction
   b. Non-fiction
3. Poetry
4. Drama

D. Science

1. Reading comprehension and vocabulary skills
2. Earth science
3. Biology
4. Physics
5. Chemistry

E. Social studies (Native American history continued to be integrated into the curriculum.)

1. World history
2. American history
3. Economics
4. Government and voting

IV. Choctaw Tribal Government

A. The tribal constitution and its provisions
B. The tribal council and its functions
C. The tribal agencies and their services

V. Driver education

A. Rules of the road
B. Road signs
C. Driving practice via simulators
D. Driving practice via driver education car

VI. Arts and crafts

A. Choctaw beadwork
B. Quilting
C. Crocheting
D. Decoupage

VII. Coping Skills (This component contained health, legal, and consumer education.)

A. Legal education

1. Citizens' rights
2. Contract terms
3. Tribal jurisdiction
4. Court procedures

B. Health education

1. The four major food groups
2. Special food needs
   a. Nutrition for older people
   b. Nutrition during pregnancy
   c. Nutrition during lactation
   d. Nutrition for diabetics
   e. Nutrition for children
   f. Nutrition for teenagers

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3. Diet plans

   a. Weight loss dieting
   b. Diabetic dieting
   c. Hypertension control dieting

4. Food preparation

5. Home safety

6. Basic medical procedures (These lessons described what a patient could expect when going into a clinic or hospital for a variety of reasons and also emphasized the importance of following directions for taking medications.)

7. Basic first aid

C. Consumer education

1. Food buying

   a. Choosing a store
   b. Preparing a shopping list
   c. Comparing prices
   d. Savings on specific items
      i. Meats
      ii. Milk
      iii. Fruits and vegetables
      iv. Breads and cereals
   e. Understanding unit pricing

2. Automobile buying

   a. Choosing the right car
   b. Choosing the right dealer
   c. Evaluating the condition of the car
   d. Determining the car's market value
   e. Financing the car
   f. Insuring the car

3. Clothes buying

   a. How to buy
   b. Where to buy
   c. How to care for after purchasing

4. Furniture and appliance buying

   a. Bedding
   b. Upholstered furniture
   c. Floor covering
   d. Wood furniture
   e. Window coverings
   f. Accessories
   g. Kitchen appliances
   h. Washer and dryer
   i. Home entertainment appliances

5. Money management

   a. Consumer credit
   b. Budgeting money
   c. Savings
   d. Insurance

MATERIALS

From the beginning, the adults indicated a heavy preference for commercially made worktexts, a surprising choice to the staff. Early in the program attempts to encourage the students to utilize teacher-made material, particularly in the area of consumer education (when no acceptable commercial materials could be found) met with failure. The adults would respond to suggestions that such (teacher-made) materials be used in classes with "I'd rather work in my real books," i.e. the commercial workbooks. This attitude is attributed to the adult's recognition of the workbooks as being like those his children use in school, his (the adult's) desire to be enrolled in a real school, his desire to study like a real student, and, also his not completely accepting his teachers as knowledgeable enough to make books for him to study.

As the program progressed, a gradual acceptance of teacher-made material occurred in much the same manner that an acceptance of consumer education occurred: adults articulated an interest in subjects not covered in the commercial books, and the teachers prepared related learning material.

In addition to the commercial worktexts, teaching materials used were those materials that the clients accepted. For instance, most of the adults rejected audio-visuals, indicating that such were not legitimate learning tools, so no a/v aids have been used. The rejection of filmstrips and records was attributed to translation difficulties for some adults. Often the dialogue of a film was so rapid that the adult didn't have time to translate what had been said in English into Choctaw before something else was said.

Only certain types of commercial material, however, worked well here; programmed books (those which had answers for checking exercises): small pamphlet-like books or programs which used cards, i.e. some excellent reading packets used a series of reading cards or pamphlets; or any material which required the adult to check his own work, correct mistakes, and pace himself were all rejected by the adults. Instead, traditional workbooks which require a teacher to explain exercises and check responses are favored by the adult perhaps because he (the adult) wants the immediate personal contact from a teacher who has watched his progress (see table 8).

For a beginning student, for a hesitant man or woman coming to school for the first time in 20 or 30 years, the personal attention of a teacher could not be substituted for by the impersonality of a programmed text. While these ordinary workbooks were used extensively, each student was carefully observed while working in his book, praised when he mastered a concept, and corrected immediately when an error was made. Simply to find by checking his own work that he had marked the correct answer was not enough. He needed encouragement by a teacher who gave him immediate feedback and discussed his progress or lack of it with him. Also, the workbooks constituted for the adults concrete evidence that they were learning. Each person kept his workbooks, and recorded the number of workbooks he had completed and the percentage of correct and incorrect responses.

Using workbooks allowed the staff to teach for overlearning. Once a concept had been discussed, the student had an array of supplementary exercises which provided the repetition he may need. It was not uncommon for a student to have two math workbooks, one used as the primary worktext, the other used as a supplement.

There were obvious disadvantages, of course, to relying heavily on commercial texts: many of the books were simply high school workbooks with new covers; or, the best workbooks had juvenile illustrations; or, the printing used was not compatable with aging eyes; or, most importantly, the books failed to move the adult sequentially from one concept to another; or, the books moved too rapidly, failing to give them time for mastering one concept before moving to another; or, they assumed that the beginning student knew more that he actually did; or, the books did not have a teacher's manual (a necessity if the staff members were inexperienced). Because of these obvious objections to commercial books and the adults' affinity for them, the staff, rather than developing a body of teacher-made learning materials in Choctaw,[29] sought to

[29]Material written in Choctaw at this point would not be possible and/or practical as most Choctaw people neither read nor write their language, although they do speak in Choctaw.

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establish criteria for evaluating commercial texts, adapted the better texts for use at Choctaw, and gradually, when the adults were ready, introduced teacher-made materials into the class—all goals which were successfully met.

The very general evaluative criteria, listed below, grew out of staff observations of client preferences. These criteria were used by the staff in the selection of material. (A list of commercial material that is used at Choctaw with varying degrees of success can be found in volume II of this report.)

(1) The illustrations are adult in nature, avoiding a sense of childishness.

(2) The print is dark, clear and easy to read.

(3) The materials are appropriate to the age group, serve the culture and the geography of the clients.

(4) The format: pages are large and open easily; the title and cover design do not suggest a grade level; the paper is non-glare, of good quality; and the book is attractive.

(5) The book has an adequate teacher's manual and answer key.

(6) A means of evaluating student progress accompanies the work.

(7) The vocabulary is controlled: the adult is not likely to suddenly encounter new words for which he is unprepared.

(8) Directions for exercises are easily understood by the student.

(9) The book's actual level of difficulty is consistent with that stated by the publisher.

(10) The work contains adequate practice exercises.

(11) Pacing throughout the book is appropriate for the student's learning level. (The book does not hastily move from one concept to another without providing an opportunity for practice.)

REDWATER DAY CLASS—Students study informally in the classes, with a teacher nearby to answer questions. Shown are Tinsley Tubby, Sr. Frances, and Wilson Dixon.

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(12) Supplementary reading material accompanies the books.

(13) The book includes a glossary and/or defines new and/or difficult words.

(14) Books in a series provide for sequence and continuity. Similarly, lessons within a book provide for sequence and continuity.

(15) Content: the book's content is relevant and purposeful; the book's content is not condescending; the book's content is adult in nature; the exercises do not require the adults to reveal information which they would rather not reveal; a book which has a number of blanks to fill in, asking names of family members, etc., may be offensive to the adults.

(16) Intermediate and advanced math books include an adequate number of verbal problems.

(17) Beginning math books for non-readers have only a few, simply written verbal problems.

(18) The book's price is reasonable.

COUNSELING

Adult counseling was an integral and continuing part of the program here; almost immediately after classes began, it became evident that, if the adults were to be free to learn, the staff would have to concern itself with the student's everyday problems. No attempts were made to employ professional counselors; it seemed that the adult staff member who had previously established trust relationships with the students were cognizant of the myriad problems brought about by economic stress, marital discontent, alcoholism, lowered self-esteem, and prejudice, that cropped up in the lives of the adults and, often by simply listening, assisted the students more than formal sessions with a counselor would have helped them.

Having teachers serve as counselors entailed the risks of having one lose his objectivity, become too involved in the personal lives of the adults, and create student dependency upon the teacher. To lessen the likelihood that such would occur, the program instead employed the approach that the adults should learn to do things for themselves rather than have someone do for and/or make decisions for them. In counseling, then, the goal was to suggest alternatives as solutions to problems and to allow the adult to choose for himself, trying never to prescribe answers to problems for the adult.

Aside from the constant demand for personal counseling, a position of counseling time was allotted for some career counseling. These situations arose when the students came into class and set unrealistic learning goals for themselves; in these cases, the staff assisted the adults in setting realistic goals for themselves; they also sought to work with individual students until those adults could recognize and cope with their own unfelt needs.

The students also requested information about and assistance with securing job training (skilled trades) and/or college coursework. The teacher then worked with the Continuing Education Center and the Manpower division to place these individuals (when they had completed the required educational level or while they were acquiring same) in satisfying training situations. The staff played a similar role in the area of job placement, aiding students who needed jobs or who wanted better employment.

The necessity of counseling as a program component could not be underestimated. It was most important, in sum, that the staff members were able to empathize with the adults and that they (the staff) were knowledgeable enough about services available to serve as a clearinghouse for the various agencies/programs existing to provide human services.

EVALUATION

Evaluation here—both of program success in broad terms and of individual student gains—was continuous, largely informal, and self-administered.

Individual student gains were evaluated via analysis of nationally standardized general ability measures—the Gray-Votaw-Rogers series, Primary, Intermediate and Advanced levels, series A, B, C, and D. (This series was adopted because of its correlation with the GED by the several

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adult education programs in the state, its flexibility of administration and its ease in scoring.) Evaluation of student progress must include more than mere test gains or losses. Such qualitative measures could be misleading, as functional illiterates weren't as likely to show dramatic improvements as were those who already had some academic skills. So, instead of relying completely on the formal testing, other success indicators (some of which are described below) such as observation, affective measures, teacher records, and questionnaires are utilized.

FORMAL TESTING

Pre-testing: The adults were tested when they enrolled in the program or shortly thereafter. (Note: Beginning students were not tested nor were those adults for whom the test posed a threat to their self-concept. The testing procedure for new students required the teacher to thoroughly orient the individual to the class, tell him about the test, its purposes, and then ask him if he'd like to take the test or wait until a few weeks had passed.)

Follow-up testing: Once the adult was enrolled and had been pretested, he was tested semi-annually on appropriate tests. His scores were recorded on his folder.

Folder system: Individual folders were kept on each student; background information, test scores, and observations made by the teachers were recorded there. The individual objectives set by each student were also listed on the folder along with the dates and conditions under which the objectives were achieved.

Observation: The staff informally observed and recorded attitudinal changes that occurred among the students, especially in terms of the adults' attitude toward education, work, family responsibilities and self. Observations of basic skills and coping skills improvement were noted, too.

SELF-EVALUATION

The adults were asked to evaluate their own progress, usually orally in sessions with their teachers. These encounters were meaningful ones where the student's delineation of his goals and his perception of how nearly he had accomplished same were recorded. (For an indication of the adults perception of their gains, see table 9.)

Evaluation of the program's progress similarly occurred via formal and informal gestures, mostly informal. Unfortunately, the program was only reviewed once by outside evaluators. A formal self-evaluation was not undertaken. Despite this, the program was, however, closely monitored by the funding agencies, the tribal chairman, the tribal council, by community leaders, and by the community members who quickly picked up discordant notes within the program, and transmitted same to the teachers and the program administrator.

Evaluation of the program was complicated by the range of objectives whose accomplishment has to be measured: there are tribal objectives, program objectives, class objectives and individual objectives. In view of this and also in view of the program's intent to respond to the community's wants, a decision was made to evaluate the program's influence by questioning informally, the students, the community leaders, the tribal leaders, and the staff; the response was more than satisfactory, with all parties involved discussing problems objectively and very frankly, and offering valid suggestions for program improvement and development.

Despite the fact that the program was closely observed and held accountable for its functions, it is desirable that it undergo a scrupulous evaluative process. Otherwise, significant gains will not be documented nor will deficiencies be identified.

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RECOMMENDATIONS AND/OR CONCLUSIONS

An examination of the data presented in the preceding sections of the report, considered along with an analysis of staff, student and community needs, resulted in the evolution of several conclusions re: program status and a set of recommendations suggested for implementation past this report. These fell into the general categories of program structure, teaching/learning approaches (all intra-class), and staffing.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

HOME-BASED INSTRUCTION

Other than that instruction which occurred whenever a teacher or teaching assistant visited a student already involved in adult education classes, no adults were taught in their home. Community surveys, however, as well as the acknowledged presence (by both staff and community) of that group within the population which was not reached by the classroom component of adult education, indicated that the addition of a home-based component to the program would not only be well received here but could also serve a valuable function.

Home-based instruction is needed to reach those clients who do not perceive the value of the classes, those who are fatalistic, those who have the greatest need, and those who will respond possibly only to services in the home. Home-based teachers can serve to ease the trauma the beginning student experiences when he first encounters the classroom situation with no previous exposure to formal education. Many adults would be willing to enter the program if they could receive a certain amount of tutoring at home prior to entering the classes.[30]

Further, visiting teachers can reach the geographically isolated in remote rural areas; by going into the homes, they can serve the entire family and will be in a position to make referrals to appropriate agencies to aid in solving family problems.

Home-based instruction can be accomplished at Choctaw with additional staff members. Now, each member is assigned to work in at least two of the communities; with more personnel, each individual could be assigned to only one community for both classroom and home instructional purposes.

EXPANSION OF CLASSES

Evening classes are operated in six of the on-reservation communities and day classes are held in addition to the evening classes in four communities. The remaining two communities have also requested day classes. Further, three other communities, one on-reservation, Bogue Homa; and two off-reservation, Nanih Waiya and Mashulaville, receive no services from the program, primarily due to their distance from the center for tribal operations and due to the funding level of the present program. Sites are available for classes in the areas, only teachers are lacking. It is recommended that the program be expanded to serve these communities, all of which are isolated from many of the service agencies.

IMPROVEMENT OF TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

In general, transporting the adults to and from classes was accomplished fairly easily. However, problems arose when the BIA schools, or Headstart, or Community Health Services had their vehicles in use when the adult classes met. Also, there were constant requests[31] from students for transportation to the tribal office complex, to Philadelphia for driver's license examinations, to Philadelphia for eye and ear examinations and to the Bureau high school for meetings. Often,

[31]Travel to the places mentioned above—tribal offices, Indian Health Service facilities, nearby towns—is not easily arranged as no viable public transportation exists and the communities are scattered over a five county area.

[30]One concern voiced by the adults who had not been to school before was that they were hesitant to come to the classes "knowing nothing," as they termed their status. A number of adults—approximately 50—asked that the teachers come to their homes to teach them basics, i.e. the alphabet, simple addition, or basic handwriting. Once this task was accomplished, once they possessed some skills, these same adults said they would be likely to then come into the community learning centers. (The Appalachian Right to Read Community Based Centers reported in their Self-Evaluation Report of August, 1973, that some success had been made in involving home bound students in additional educational programs.)

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this transportation was provided by the staff's personal automobiles. While it is not recommended here that a fleet of buses be purchased for adult education, it is recommended that the program have two vans or station wagons for its use whenever a BIA, Headstart, or CHS bus is not available and for its use in transporting students during the day (the buses used at night are not available during the day) to meetings, to the hospital, and to driver's examinations.

IMPROVEMENT OF CHILD-CARE SYSTEM

Childcare in the evenings, as was previously noted, was provided by enrollees in the tribe's various manpower projects. Although this arrangement generally worked, a negative aspect of the plan was that the women assigned to care for the children were unable to attend the classes. Often they (the sitters) expressed dissatisfaction with the arrangement which prevented their studying. Too, since the women were also not directly employed by adult education, some problems arose vis á vis attendance and working schedules. It is therefore recommended that adult education be allowed to employ on a part-time basis one woman from each community who already has a high school diploma or who is not interested in additional schooling and who will be available to attend child-care training sessions and other adult education related functions.

PHYSICAL FACILITIES

Physical facilities in some communities were excellent while those in others were far less than adequate, i.e. in communities with no community building and with no high school, the adult classes were held in sixth grade classrooms at the Bureau schools where the adults were forced to sit in child size chairs and study at child size desks. Lighting and sound-proofing were usually inadequate for the older person's needs. Most disturbing, however, was the fact that in only one community was a class assigned its own classroom; other classes shared their meeting places with school children, community groups, and other tribal programs (whose staff might be in the same room with the adults during day classes). Progress has been made, however. The Bureau of Indian Affairs remodeled and rewired a building for adult education in one community; a new facility building with an adult education classroom is nearing completion in another; and, plans for similar facilities in each community are being made.

It is recommended that each class have access to a classroom with good lighting, sound proofing, storage space, and adult size tables and chairs.

SUMMER SCHEDULING

Attendance regularly declined each summer as can be noted in table 6. A provision to allow the students a summer break from classes is recommended due to the following:

(1) The adults lived in rural areas and in the summers were concerned in the cool late afternoons and early evenings with farming and gardening activities;

(2) The children were also home from the boarding schools in the summers and the parents wanted to be home with these children;

(3) In addition, summer recreation, church affairs and tribal festivals drew adults from the classes;

(4) And, of those adults who remained, many asked that classes be dismissed for a few weeks. (These particular students, while they felt a need to be elsewhere, did not want to completely withdraw for the summer and as they stated, "miss something at class."

A proposed solution would be to close the classes for six weeks, from mid-July until September, thereby serving several purposes:

(1) The adults would have a much desired break from the classes.

(2) The paraprofessionals could carry a full academic courseload with time for studying.

(3) The teachers who have extensive teaching duties would be able to spend time developing instructional materials, updating records, and attending training. As the program is now structured, very little time is available for such.

(4) The break would also enable the staff to participate in in-service training. As the program now exists, classes must be cancelled in order to set aside time for in-service training.

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ADDITIONAL SKILLS COMPONENT

For some adults who earned their high school diploma via the GED, finding a better job was a difficult task, partially because of the student's lack of additional skills and/or their inability to obtain additional skill training. Typing is a subject most often requested by females in the program and mechanics' training is that often sought by men. While it would be difficult to offer the latter, a typing class could be taught with relatively few expenses. Too, many of the women who have earned GED's could find employment as secretaries and clerk typists if they were able to type. It is recommended that the program seek funds to add this component.

TEACHING/LEARNING APPROACHES

LANGUAGE ARTS

An examination of test scores revealed the weakest area for grade level achievement to be that of language arts. It is recommended that this area be further investigated as to cause, and that steps be taken to remedy the situation via additional training, identification of better commercial learning material, and the development of relevant teacher-made material.

INDIVIDUALIZED INSTRUCTION

An individualized, personal approach rather than a programmed, mechanistic approach was preferred by the adults as the survey previously cited indicated. Individualized instruction led to the development of an interpersonal relationship between the teacher and student which contributed significantly to program success and its holding power with the students. It is recommended that this approach, when applicable, be continued.

EVALUATION—PROGRAM AND INDIVIDUAL LEARNER

During preparation of the report, an analysis of all individual gains was not possible due to irregularities in measurement; further, the program's initial testing and placement system appeared inadequate. It is recommended that this area be examined for solutions to the above described problems.

Programmatic evaluation is necessary to insure maximum growth for all the adult education clients. A comprehensive, outside evaluation of all program components has not occurred and it is recommended that such be planned and implemented.

ADULTS READINESS

Clearly, staff members here saw that adult learners will not accept and/or participate in learning experiences for which they feel no need, despite the fact that they (the adults) could benefit from such. It is recommended, then, that adult students be exposed to possible topics for study and that they have the benefits of such study clearly explained to them. They could not, however, be urged to study something unless they indicate a definite readiness for doing so.

STAFFING

Progress in the adult education program depended ultimately on a competent, well-informed, dedicated staff—competent and responsible in professional areas, sensitive to adult problems and community needs, and capable of adjusting to a changing program. Further, it became clear that paraprofessionals must not be merely clerical aides. High school and GED graduates could be highly successful teachers, given a professional back-up person and a wide range of materials. It is strongly recommended that paraprofessionals be utilized in instructional roles in adult educating programs.

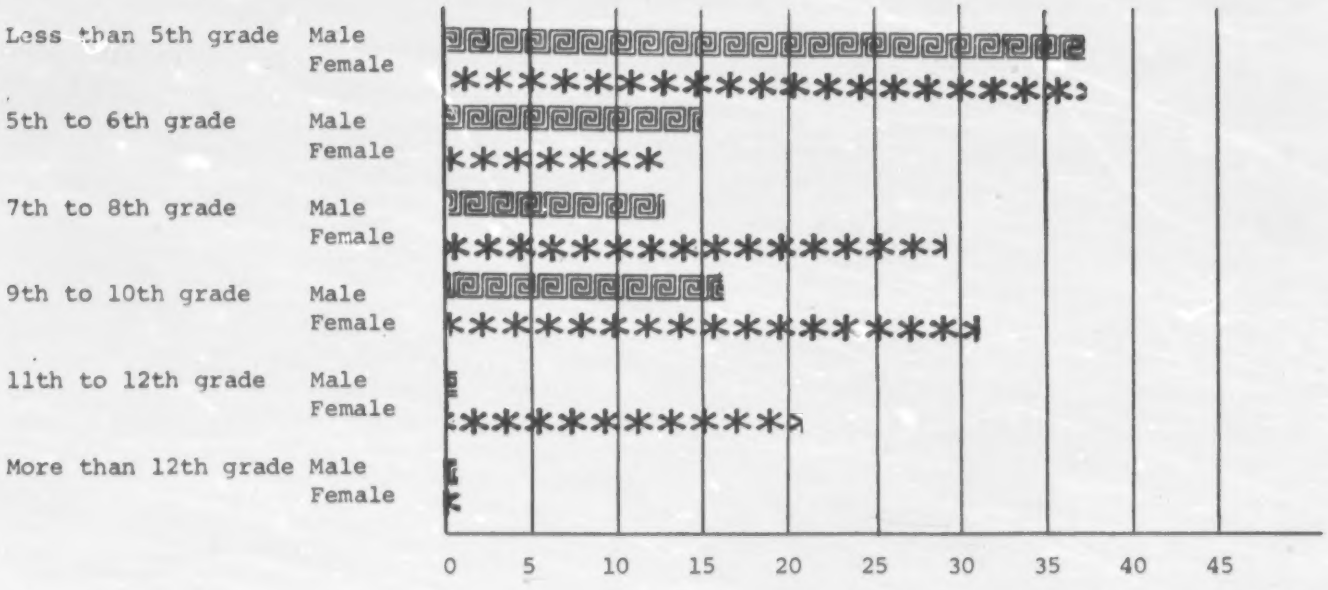
0068

APPENDIX

p. 64 blank

TABLE 1

Educational Level of Students



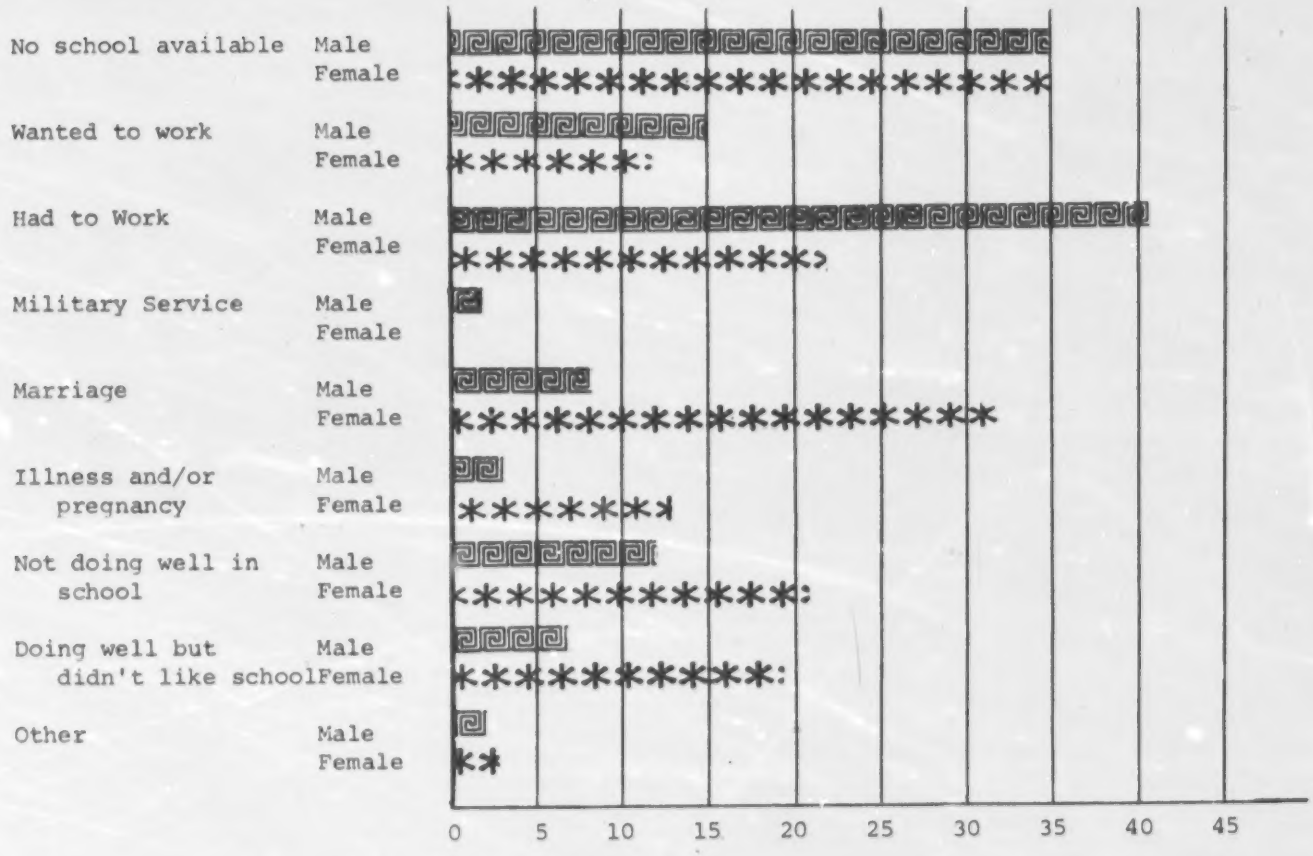
Number of students surveyed

Male - 84

Female - 135

TABLE 2

Reasons For Level Of Schooling Completed: Re Table 1



Number of students surveyed

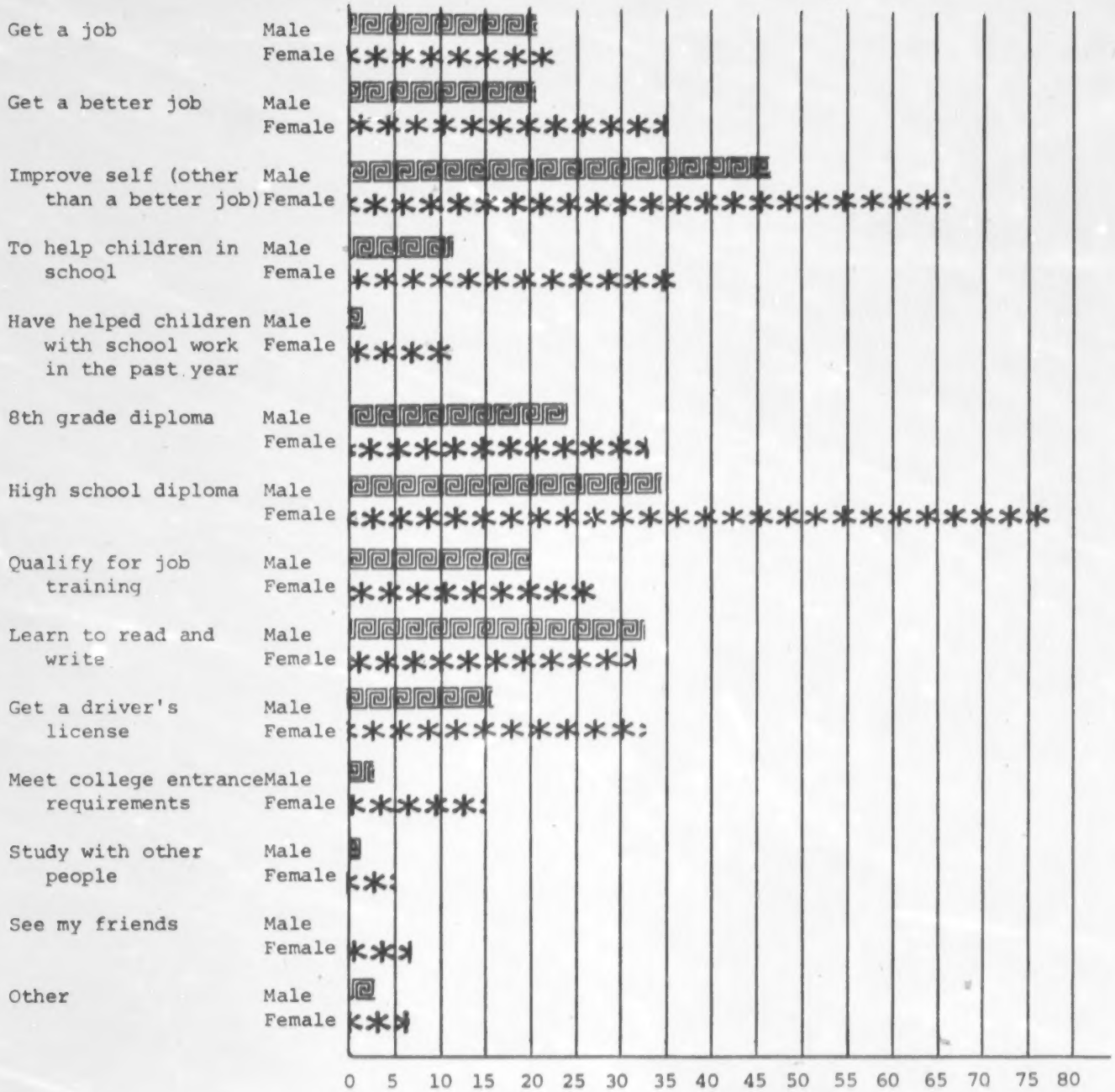
Male - 84

Female - 135

0071

TABLE 3

Reasons For Attending Class



Number of students surveyed

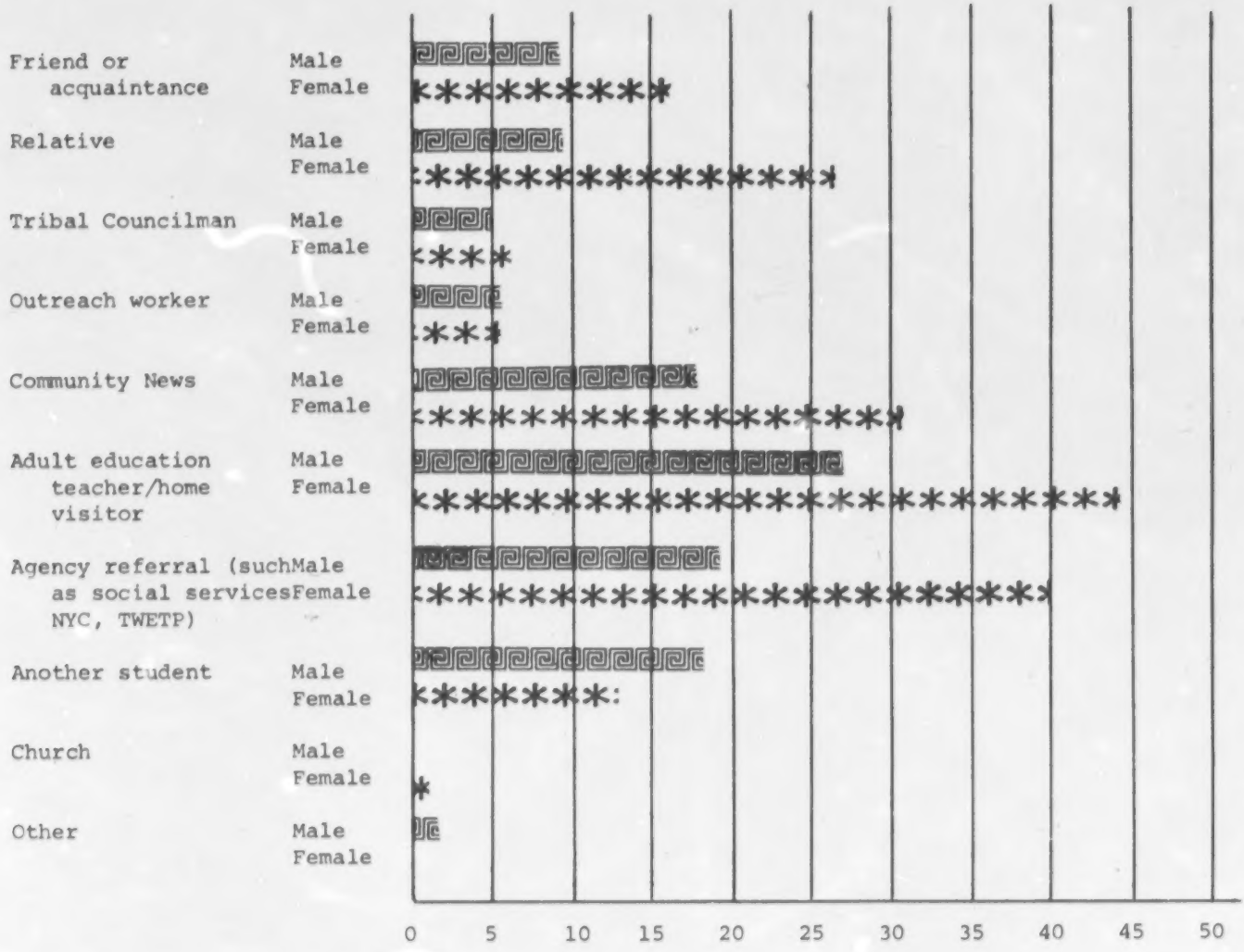
Male - 84

Female - 135

0072

TABLE 4

Sources Of Information About Adult Education



Number of students surveyed

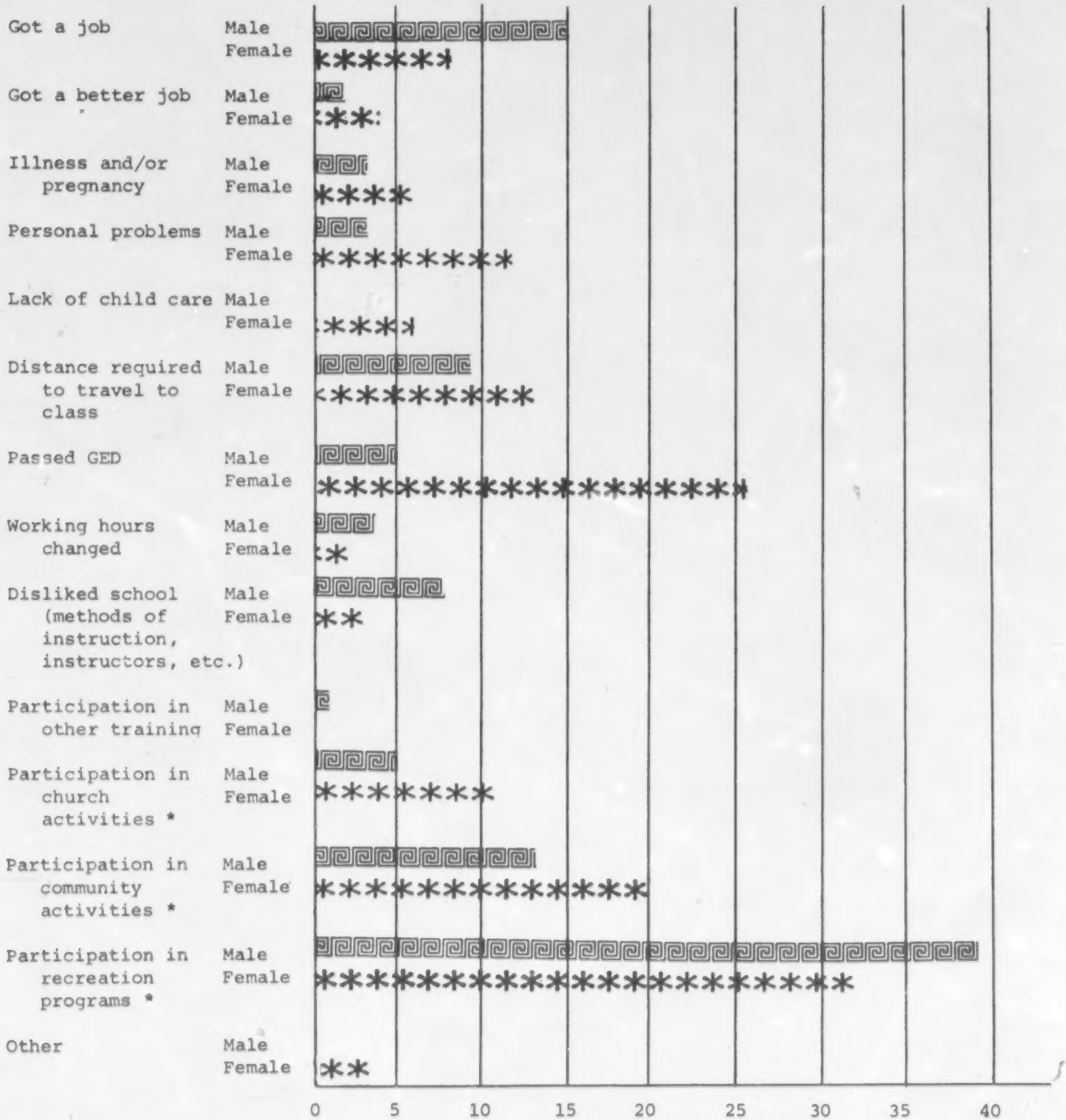
Male - 84

Female - 135

0073

TABLE 5

Reasons For Withdrawal



Number of students surveyed

Male - 84

Female - 135

* These responses apply to temporary summer withdrawals only.

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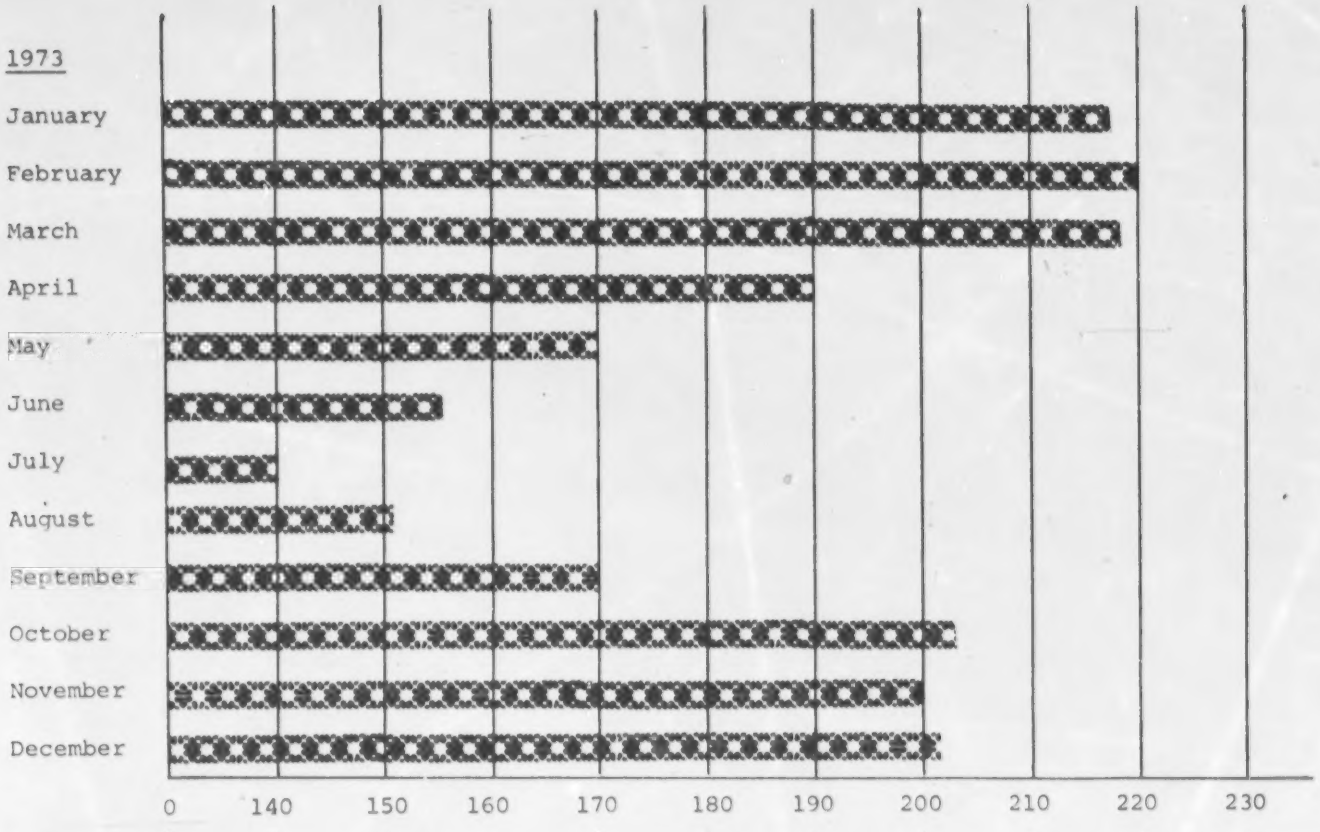
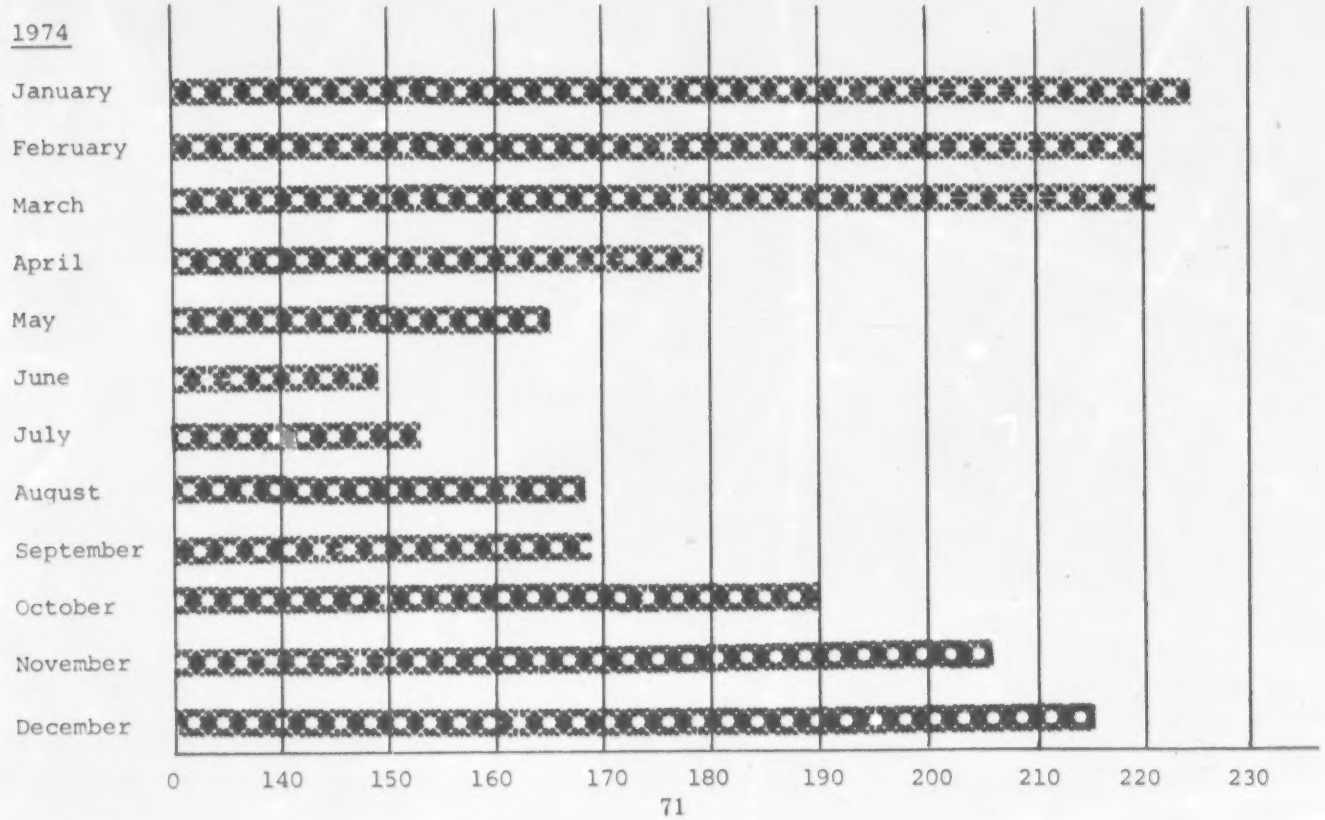
TABLE 6

Attendance Fluctuations





075

TABLE 7

Student Preference For Types of Instruction

Taught 1 at a time
Male
Female
Taught in a group by the teacher
Male
Female
Read and talk with others in the group
Male
Female
0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60 65 70

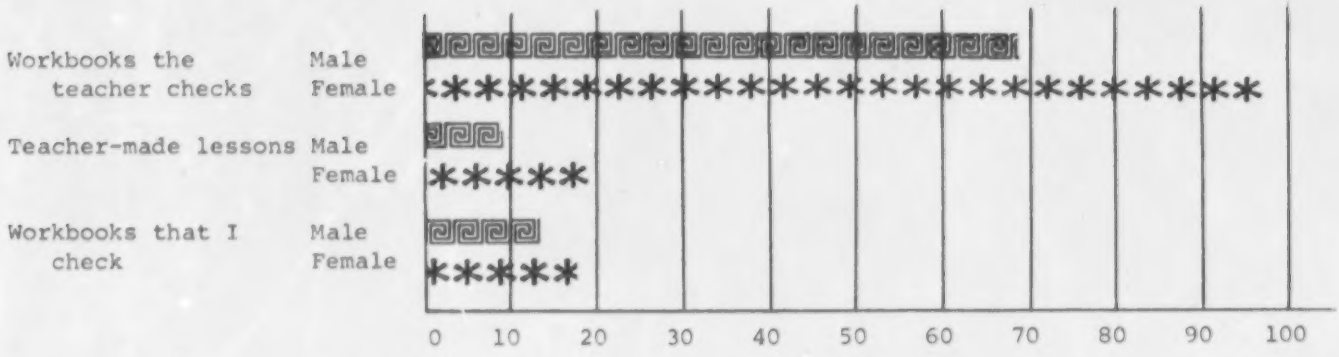
Number of students surveyed

Male - 84

Female - 135

TABLE 8

Preference of Books and Materials



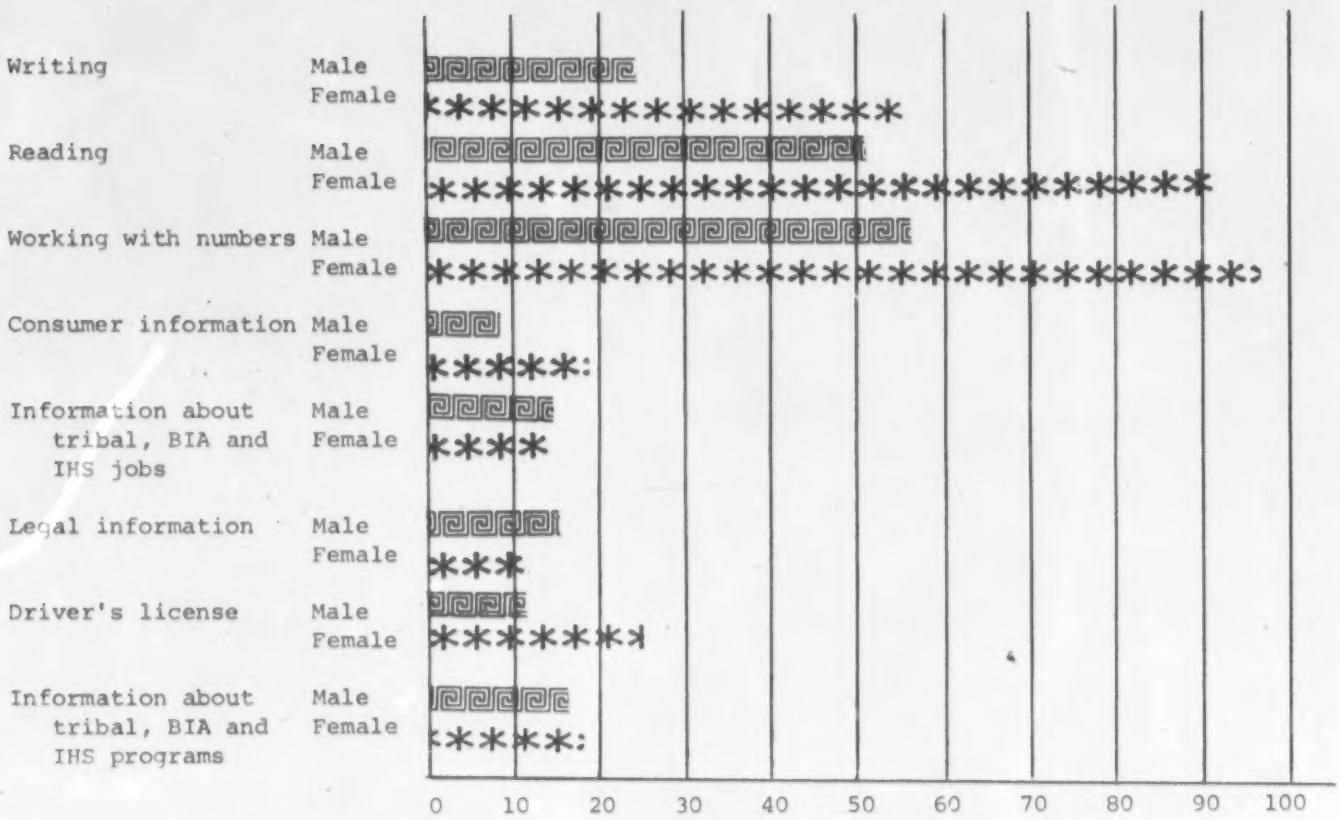
Number of students surveyed

Male - 84

Female - 135 *******

TABLE 9

Most Worthwhile Information Gained



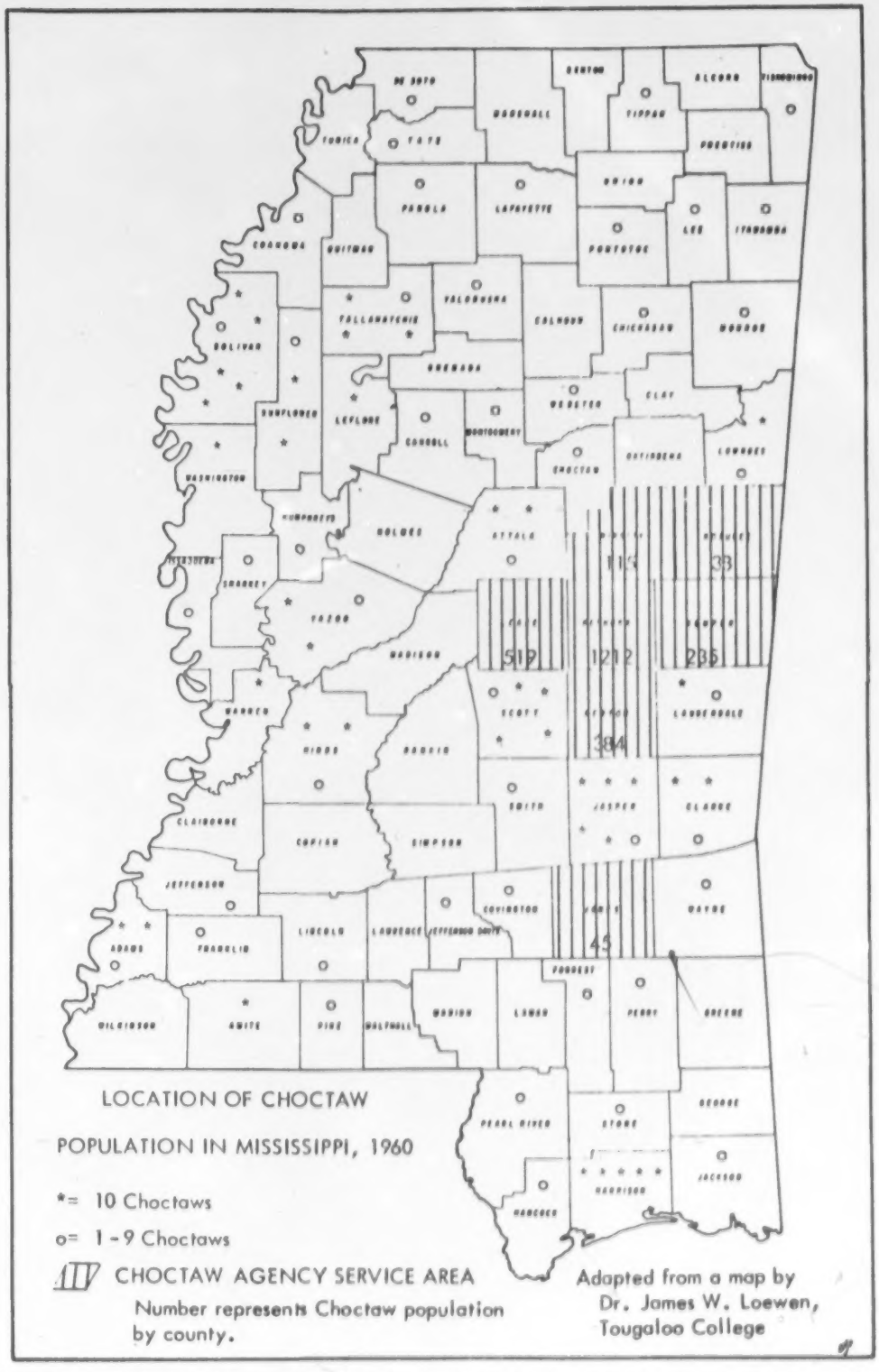
Number of students surveyed

Male - 84

Female - 135

078

Figure 1 **

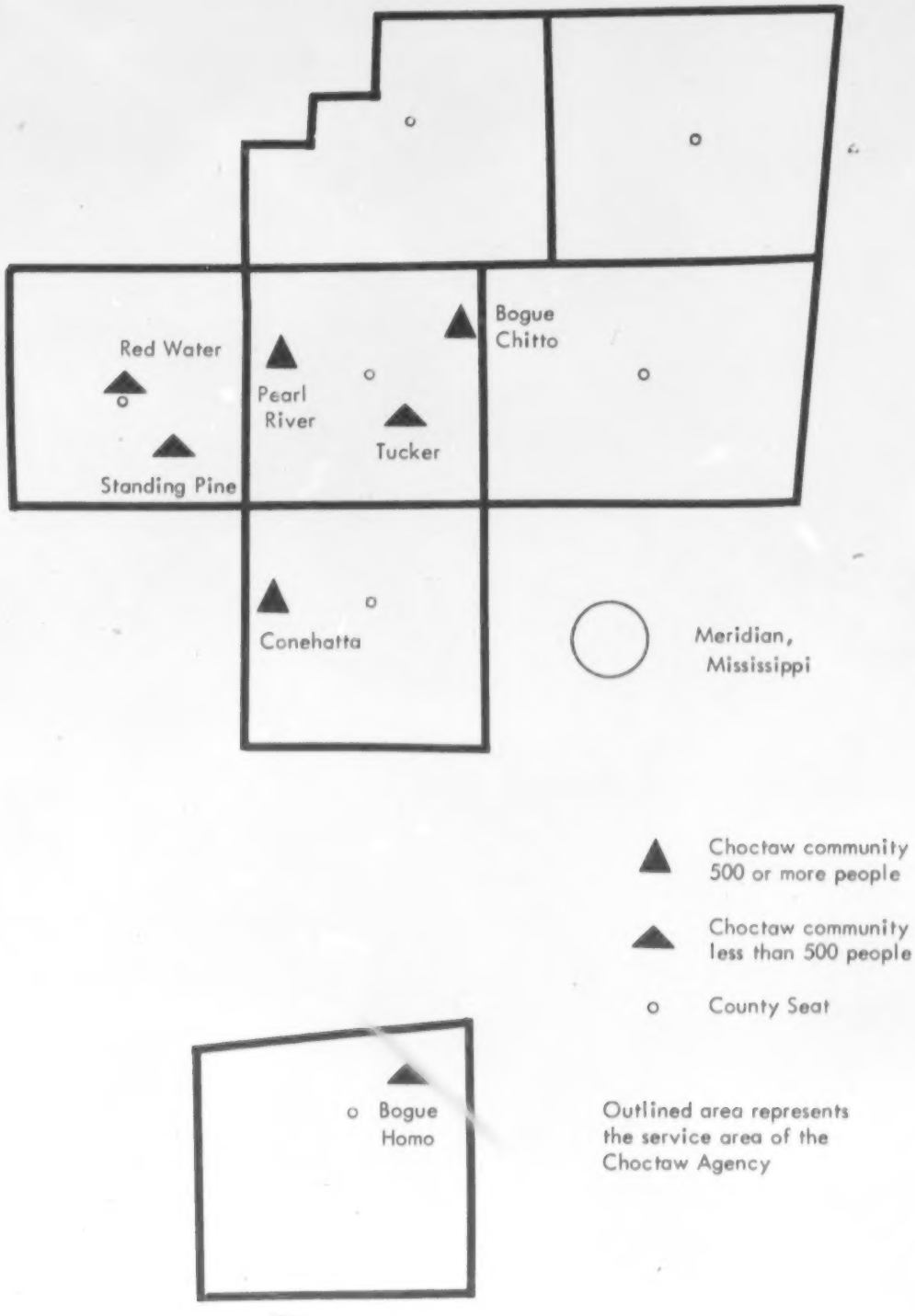


** FROM Peterson, John H., Jr., Mississippi State University Social Science Research Center, Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Mississippi Choctaw Indians, Report 34, Education Series 9; June, 1970

079

Figure 2

LOCATION OF CHOCTAW COMMUNITIES
IN MISSISSIPPI



0080

Figure 3

The Clarion-Ledger

Mississippi's Leading Newspaper For More Than A Century

JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI, MONDAY, JANUARY 14, 1974

TRIBAL OR BUREAU OPERATION?

Choctaws Debate Schools

By JEAN CULBERTSON
Clarion-Ledger Staff Writer

Whether Choctaw schools will be run by Indians or by the Bureau of Indian Affairs was the issue at a Tribal "Conference on Indian Education" over the weekend which attracted two national figures in the field.

John Rouillard, director of native American studies at San Diego State, told the tribe that tribal-run schools are the "only inevitable salvation for the Indian way.

The issue of the tribe contracting with the BIA to take over and run the existing system of Indian schools was what brought representatives of six Choctaw communities together for the education conference.

The question is not so much whether the tribe will take the responsibility for the Indian school but when and how.

One of the crucial issues, according to a tribal spokesman, has been teachers: Choctaws don't have enough college graduates with teaching certificates to staff the schools.

Billy Chickaway was the one who asked Rouillard the big question: "How do you feel about using non-Indian teachers until there are enough Indians?"

"Ideally, you want more Indian teachers," Rouillard advised, "but control is the desirable thing." He noted that nationally there are "too many teachers" but still not enough Indians qualified in education, predicting that "Maybe in 20 years, we'll be halfway there."

Dr. Bea Medicine from Dartmouth College, where she is professor of native American studies, told the Choctaws, "Historically, early education is meant to alienate, to take us away from our background. . .to make brown white men out of us.

"The time has come," she declared, "to provide the kind of education we want for our children."

She talked about Indian values, language, heritage and "thought processes," about preserving Indian culture rather than submitting to "deculturalization" in white schools.

Parental involvement, the speaker said, on a continuous basis is necessary to perpetuate culture and "meaningful education for our children."

The attractive Indian educator, wearing handwrought silver and jade jewelry, arrived at the end of the conference and also addressed a group the next day in the junior high school. She was delayed by bad weather in the northeast United States.

Rouilliard called education "the most important area of Indian self-determination." He warned that Indian schools perpetuate Indian culture, that if the education movement is squelched or fizzles out "in a very few short generations there'll be no more Indians.

"A lot of people think that assimilation should happen," he told the choctaws and "I hope you're not some of them."

Rouillard, who is a Santee Sioux, looks for the day when "Indian value systems become as valid as the majority systems."

The education conference began with supper, which Indian families attended. The adults settled down to listen and ask questions as to play.

Bobby Thompson, vice chairman of the Choctaw Tribal Council, opened with a welcome and discussion of involvement. He asked parents not just to send their children to school but to become a part of the school system, to know what is expecod so they can assist in fulfilling those needs.

He talked about the tribe "wanting to contract the school system "the way people say it should be and get the most for the children of the reservation."

Rouillard, too, called for parental involvement, and talked about the drop-out problem, in repsonse to questions from a panel, which included Jimmy Gibson, principal of Choctaw Central; Robert Benn, superintendent of the Choctaw agency; Max Jimmy, New Careers trainee; Benford Tubby, teacher in adult basic education, and Irma Jimmy, counselor in the mental health and alcoholism program.

Indian absenteeism is the biggest school problem, the guest speaker agreed. "The white is conditioned to be there. The Indians has not been conditioned to be there (in school). If someone passes away, you go home."

The Indian from an urban environment can adjust to college, but the reservation Indian student has to problem of meeting the basic level of the college student, plus the language barrier.

Rouillard defended the bilingual culture of the Indian, insisting that speaking the Indian language "will never hold you back, it will hold you up." He called upon teachers to understand.

The drop-out problem, according to the speaker, is generated by schools which fail to offer supporting course in Indian culture, to be "relevant to their interests" and responsive to Indians' needs.

Being away from home is difficult for the reservation Indian, the educator added. But he opposes the weaning process beginning in the public school system. The guest speakers are both strong avocates for 'Indian teachers for Indian words, and eventually Indian teachers for Inian children, looking toward a "definite change within 20 years."

Figure 4

Name	Pre-program Educational Background	Employment Status When Employed By Adult Education	Date Employed	Hours Earned Via Adult Education	Career Goals
Sandra Bell	GED via adult education	Family Education day care center	Mar[illegible], 1973	26	Teacher certification in early childhood education
Billy Chickaway	High school graduate; 7 semester hours	Dyslexia aide, BIA Schools	July, 1972	73	BA anthropology
Troy Chickaway	High school graduate; 56 semester hours	Student	July, 1972	60	BA social work
Donna J. Farmer	High school graduate; secretarial training	Secretary, Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians	July, 1972	66	Teacher certification in elementary education
Junius Lewis	GED via adult education	Manpower department trainee	August, 1973	22	Teacher certification in secondary education
Donna Morris	High school graduate	Title I teacher's aide	July, 1972	55	Teacher certification in business education
Mary Agnes Smith	GED via adult education	Operation Mainstream enrollee	March, 1974	9	Teacher certification in elementary education

Figure 4 (continued)

Name	Pre-program Educational Background	Employment Status When Employed by Adult Education	Date Employed	Hours Earned Via Adult Education	Career Goals
Ruby Thomas	High school graduate; nurse's aide training	Employed	January, 1974	32	BS/RN in nursing
Benford Tubby	GED graduate via adult education	Mainstream director	July, 1972	63	Teacher certification in secondary education
Shirley Willis	GED graduate via adult education	Unemployed	May, 1974	18	BS/RN nursing
Sammie Wilson, Jr.	High school graduate; 17 semester hours	Unemployed	August, 1973	27	Teacher certification in physical education

Figure 5

ABE classes have visitors

by Nell Rogers

April has been an especially busy month for all of us in adult education as all the staff members prepared for examinations in their college courses. (Most of them have very good grades and possibly several will have A's in their coursework, a very outstanding record when one considers that the adult education teachers very often teach four nights a week.)

The staff has also been involved in the first half of a teacher training program funded by USET's Indian Teacher Training Project. Dr. Richard Etheridge, head of Mississippi State University's Department of adult education is conducting the training session in teaching reading to adults. The daily meetings have been exciting ones as the staff learned to develop new methods and new materials for teaching their adult students to read. Dr. Etheridge will return to Choctaw April 30, May 1 and May 2 for the second half of the training program.

Another inservice training session was jointly conducted by Beth Henry, adult education specialist, and Ms. Nancy Ertz, nutrition specialist from Mississippi State University and was attended by adult education staff as well as interested people from other programs. We are beginning to slowly implement nutrition education in the Red Water, Bogue Chitto and Pearl River classes; as staff and time permit, this will be expanded to all classes.

Ed Smith, Choctaw Legal Services Attorney, and Edward John also from CLS, were at the Pearl River day class to discuss with the students their legal rights.

Billy Chickaway was away one week in April to attend the State Manpower Council Training program held in Meridian.

Donna Morris, adult education teacher in Pearl River, was selected by the PCDP parents as an alternate representative to the PCDP Board.

One adult education teacher, Maggie Chitto, resigned to join PCDP as an assistant health coordinator; while we are indeed sorry to see her leave adult education, we are, at the same time, equally certain that her background training and experience will enable to contribute to the success of Choctaw's health-education programs.

During April, our classes were visited by Ted Freeman, Regional Project Officer for HEW from Atlanta, and John Williams, state supervisor of adult education for Mississippi. Both visited the Pearl River day class and observed the staff and students working there. Both Mr. Freeman and Mr. Williams were invited to and expressed an interest in returning to visit all the evening adult education classes as well.

Plans for May include the second section of the reading workshop, attendance by the Staff of the Conference on Indian Education scheduled for the first weekend in May at the University of Alabama and the beginning of the summer quarter for the staff members.

RED WATER DAY CLASS
by Sr. Karen

Nutrition was the topic of interest one Thursday. Beth Henry is designing a consumer education course for our program, and we have borrowed a lesson or two from it already. Eunice Billy, Loraine Billy, Leona John, Rena John, Cecelia John, Ida Dixon, Adeline Jim, Rosie Lee Tubby, and Tommie Jean Billy discussed the four basic food groups. We compared their meals of the day before with a balanced diet and tried to point out that different age groups have different needs. Everyone seemed to enjoy the change from reading and arithmetic. We hope to do more work on budgeting, dieting, and purchasing in the future.

Clarence Dixon, James Dixon, Mike John, Houston Lewis, Homer Sockey, and Woodrow Willis are working hard with Sammy Wilson, Jr. We are happy to report that Woodrow Wilson passed his driving test and Herman Billie passed his GED.

CONEHATTA DAY CLASS
By Anne Birkey

This month is a month for congratulations at Conehatta. Vera Willis and Henry Williams passed their GED tests, Edna Smith will be finishing hers on Monday. Mollie Smith has reached 8th grade level after much hard work and will get her 8th grade diploma.

Nancy King, Elizabeth Farmer, Welford Williams and Joe King are students who just recently joined Sandra Bell's group. Sandy reports that they do good work, and we are glad they are coming to class. Phillip Williams is doing good work in spelling and reading and Neva Dixon is showing progress also.

Hattie Johnson is learning to divide, Houston Anderson is working hard in his math and English books, Otha Johnson has been working on math reading problems and Hinton Anderson is learning to add and subtract. Troy reports that they are all doing very good work.

Ruby Thomas' group is working diligently on fractions and showing good progress. They are all working together on oral reading and answer questions at the end of a story.

My group is doing very good work. Billy Isom, Harold Denson and Dewey Thomas joined just recently. Delores Ben has been working hard on her multiplication tables and almost knows all of them.

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From The Schoolhouse

Choctaw Adult Education Program

BOGUE CHITTO CLASS
by Beth Henry

During the months of March and April, the Bogue Chitto night class has witnessed many changes and much progress. First we would like to welcome our new students: Ellis Thompson, Bessie Jim and Mazell Amos. Congratulations to Janie Bell who, once again, made perfect attendance.

Sandy Bell has seen improvement in the work of her students, Clara Cotton and Julia Bell.

Donna Morris proudly reports that Annie Henry has finished her book "English for Adults" - 1 and has started Book 2 now. She also is doing well in spelling. She says she would like to see more of Wallace and Foster Bell, and Willie Dean Cotton and is glad to see Martha Frazier return.

Edna Hickman is doing well in division and John Levi is learning arithmetic very well.

Robert Bell, Sharon and John Gibson, Nora Thompson and Estel Willis would be welcomed back.

Grady Bell drives the bus for us sometimes.

We were pleased to see both Dolphus and Isaac Henry at least once these past 2 months.

Lucy Morris and Robert Bell are taking the test for the 8th grade diploma.

Janie Bell has begun some new GED books and is always a steady and serious learner. She is doing well.

The night class had a visitor from Mississippi State University, Nancy Ertz. She talked to us about Spending the Food Dollar and how to save money at the grocery store. We enjoyed sampling foods together.

We hope to have a pot luck supper together soon.

Standing Pine Night Class
Sr. Karen

The first to arrive for class last Wednesday night almost prevented class from taking place. All the students stopped to meet it. Donna and I were carrying in the coffee and cookies when a strong wind slammed the school door shut! Bus keys and door keys were locked inside! Suddenly, the rattlesnake was no longer the center of attraction.

Hester York finally arrived to let us inside. I was hoping he would stay for class. Four new people have joined us: Dallis Lewis, Fannie Sue Johnson, Aline Williams, and Arlie Dee York. We are delighted to see the number growing again.

Four students are awaiting the results of their GED. Una Mae Denson and Maxine Gibson have finished their second edition Language Book. Claude Jim has started doing GED books.

Joseph Farve, Roger Gibson, Jim Lewis and Prentis Lewis are keeping Sammy Wilson, Jr., busy with their reading and math questions.

We all welcomed the treat Mr. Allen left for us one evening. The film "Cheyenne Autumn" was all set up and ready to roll. Many children and members of the community benefited from this timely reminder of the American Indians long and courageous struggle for peace and self-determination.

CONEHATTA NIGHT CLASS

By Anne Birkey

We're happy for Lavada Jim because she passed her GED test; she really studied hard to get ready for it and the hard work paid off! Idalene Solomon will be taking her test with Edna Smith on Monday and Tuesday before graduation.

The students in our class are all hard workers and are making good progress and I am proud to report that the attendance has been fairly regular. Carol Isaac is working on percentage problems in math and she and Verdie Lewis are doing very well in spelling.

Troy works hard with his group, which includes a new student, Mary Lou Jefferson, Hattie Johnson, Neva Dixon, Elizabeth Farmer and Hinton Anderson.

Ruby is working with her group on spelling, reading and math. She is pleased with her students: Mollie Smith, Murphy Solomon, and Louise Denson.

Ruby also became our new bus driver last week. The first time she drove the bus it stopped running in the middle of the pick-up route! Better luck next time, Ruby. We're glad you're driving.

BOGUE CHITTO DAY CLASS
by Anne Birkey

Leonard Bell and Lois Jackson passed their GED tests just recently. Congratulations! Lucy Morris is presently working on an 8th grade level and will be getting her 8th grade diploma at graduation. Mary Robinson, Diane Joe and Shirley Lewis all got their driver's licenses and Tony Bell got his driving permit.

Larry Diener's group is working on reading and on their multiplication tables. Also, some are working on addition and subtraction. He has been giving them multiplication tests and sees progress.

Sandra Bell's group has really grown. She is working with them on improving their reading skills, and on fractions. Ben Hollis Lewis is reading the English translation of books that were written in Navajo.

Beth reports that her group is working very well. They are learning their ABC's, working on carrying and division in their math books, Junius' group is working hard on memorizing the alphabet and working on learning to recognize and spell words. Junius says they are all working hard and doing very well.

The group of people I work with are trying to improve their vocabulary by learning to spell new words, learning the definitions and learning to use them properly in sentences.

Figure 6

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ABE program honors graduates

Figure 7

Sixteen adult education students who had earned high school equivalency diplomas during the past six months were honored at an adult education's graduation held April 26 at Pearl River.

Diplomas were awarded by Tribal Chairman Phillip Martin to Leonard Bell and Lola Jackson of Bogue Chitto; Edna Smith, Vera Willis, Lavada Jim, Henry Williams, and Patrick Willis of Conehatta; Jane Morris, Minnie Thompson, Otis Ben, Myrtis Morris and Willie Mae Jim of Pearl River; Ruth Ann Willis and Herman Billie of Red Water; and Shirley and LeRoy Willis of Standing Pine.

Also honored at the graduation were eight adults who earned eighth grade equivalencies, 47 adults who had perfect attendance records, and 10 adults who had received driver's licenses and/or permits recently. Those recipients were the following: eighth grade--Shirley Lewis, Lucy Morris, Janie Bell, Grady Bell, Sharon Gibson, Mallie Smith, Patricia Mitch and Frances Allen; perfect attendance--Julia Bell, Janie Bell, Wagon Amos, Homer Bell, Leonard Bell, Roma Bell, Bessie Jim, Ben Hollis Lewis, Cornelia Morris, Shirley Lewis, Silman Vaughn, Carl Robinson, Luch Morris, Louise Denson, Otha Johnson, Mallie Smith, Vera Willis, Hattie Johnson, Harold Denson, Joe King, Lavada Jim, Christine Hickman, McKinly Jim, Jane Morris, George Tubby, Henry Tubby, Isa Bell, Naomi Bell, Otis Ben, Lewis Tubby, Mary Chickaway, Annie Clemons, Addie McMillin, Kate Billie, Jean Tubby, Loraine Billy, Tommy Jean Billy, Rena John, Rosalie Tubby, Clarence Dixon, Leona John, Una Denson, Maxine Gibson, Edna Lewis, Delores Sockey, and Joseph Farve; driver's license--Willie Dean Cotton, Shirley Lewis, Mary Robinson, Diane Joe, Tony Bell, Cecil Dixon, Jerry Chitto and Woodrow Willis.

The graduates and an audience of approximately 300 were addressed by four tribal leaders who have been concerned with increasing educational opportunities for the Choctaw people--Frank Henry, Indian Health Service Director, Choctaw Agency; Robert Benn, Choctaw Agency Superintendent; Jimmy Gibson, Choctaw Central High School Principal; and Phillip Martin, Choctaw Tribal Chairman.

The Rev. Thomas Ben said the invocation.

Following the graduation, a reception was held for the adult students and graduation guests. Serving at the reception were adult students from each class: Delores Ben, Katie Willis, Janie Bell, Shirley Lewis, Lucy Morris, and Naomi Bell.

Entertainers at the reception were Wagon Amos and Henry Joe, The Claude Allen Dancing Troupe, and the Bogue Chitto Dancers.

ABE GRADUATION--The Adult Basic Education program held graduation ceremonies Friday, April 26 at the Pearl River Facility Building. The night's speakers were Frank Henry, Service Unit Director, Jimmie L. Gibson, Choctaw Central principal, Robert Benn, Choctaw Agency Superintendent and Tribal Chairman Phillip Martin.

GED graduates are (first row from left) Lola Jackson, Willie Mae Jim, Leonard Bell, Rena Jane Morris, Minnie Thompson and Otis Ben. Second row, Frank Henry, Jimmy L. Gibson, Lee Roy Willis, Shirley Willis, Ruth Ann Willis, Horman Billie, Lavada Jim, Henry Williams, Vera Briscoe, Phillip Martin and Robert Benn.

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LEARNING

a life long process at Choctaw . . .

CHOCTAW ADULT EDUCATION

Figure 8

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